



# **PAS Student Didactic Handbook**

**Revised August 2024**

## **Academic and Administrative Policies and Procedures**

Information in this handbook is considered policy and procedure of the Department of Physician Assistant Studies. Each student is responsible for knowing current academic and administrative policies and procedures that apply to enrollment in their degree program. The University of North Texas Health Science Center (HSC) reserves the right to amend or add to these policies and scholastic regulations at any time during an individual student’s enrollment period provided that such changes or additions are intended to improve the quality of education and are introduced in a fair and deliberate manner. Students in the Physical Assistant Studies (PAS) program are subject to HSC institutional and PAS program policies while on or off campus during PAS student activities. All policies of HSC, College of Health Professions (CHP), and PAS programs will be in effect. For a complete listing of university policies, see [unthsc.policytech.com](http://unthsc.policytech.com). Approved university and program policies and procedures can be accessed on PolicyTech and on the PA Faculty Canvas page. All program policies apply to all students, faculty, and staff.



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# **HSC Physician Assistant Studies**

## **Welcome!**

The Physician Assistant Studies (PAS) program at The University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth (HSC) is housed in the College of Health Professions (CHP), which includes Physical Therapy and Personalized Health and Well Being programs. The mission and goals for the PAS program are as follows:

## **UNTHSC Mission**

Create solutions for a healthier community.

## **PAS Program Mission**

The mission of the Program is to create solutions for a healthier community by preparing graduates with knowledge and skills needed for physician assistant practice, emphasizing primary care medicine and meeting the healthcare needs of underserved populations.

## **PAS Program Goals**

**Goal 1:** Graduates will demonstrate knowledge needed for PA Practice by achieving acceptable mean scores on the PANCE.

**Goal 2:** Graduates will contribute to solving the healthcare workforce needs.

**Goal 3:** Students will demonstrate professional behaviors during clinical interactions in the PA program.

**Goal 4:** Students and alumni will report satisfaction in the quality of the PA program.

# **HSC Student Code of Conduct and Civility**

## **Overview**

HSC has adopted policies to govern student behavior that are educational in nature and designed to help students understand expectations and accept responsibility for their own actions. PAS students are expected to read, understand, and comply with the Student Code of Conduct & Civility (“The Code”).

## **Student Code of Conduct and Civility (“The Code”)**

Enrollment at HSC is considered implicit acceptance of the Student Code of Conduct & Civility (“The Code”) and all other policies applicable to students. The Student Code of Conduct & Civility (“The Code”) can be accessed at [this link](#).

### **Plagiarism**

PAS students are expected to abide by the Student Code of Conduct & Civility (“The Code”). In “The Code,” Plagiarism is defined as the use of another's thoughts, words, or ideas without proper attribution in any academic exercise, regardless of the student's intent, including but not limited to: The knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotations of the published or unpublished words/ideas of another without proper acknowledgement or citation; and the knowing or negligent submission of materials prepared by another, including an individual or entity engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials. Self-plagiarism is an author's or publisher's reuse of their own intellectual material without proper acknowledgement, including but not limited to: the use of the same words or ideas from previous work; the submitting of materials that have previously been submitted; publication of the same paper in multiple places; and the use of data from previous studies without disclosure to the reader. Plagiarism is considered a form of academic dishonesty and is a serious offense that is not tolerated by HSC. Any act of plagiarism or self-plagiarism may result in sanctioning by Student Affairs. For more information, see the University Policy on Plagiarism.

### **Social Media and Professionalism Policy**

Social media has created unique opportunities for interaction, communication, and networking. PAS students are expected to abide by the Student Code of Conduct & Civility (“The Code”) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) when using social media by not revealing patient/client/research subject information, private content, or proprietary information regarding patient/client/research subjects of HSC. For more information, see the University Policy on Social Media and Professionalism.

### **Consequences for PAS Program Students**

Note that violations of the Student Code of Conduct & Civility (“The Code”) are grounds for dismissal from the PAS program. In addition, PAS students who commit “minor” violations of the Student Code of Conduct & Civility (“The Code”) are not eligible for PAS honors and awards. Furthermore, when preparing materials for state licensure, PAS graduates must disclose to the Texas Medical Board all Student Code of Conduct & Civility (“The Code”) violations during their PA education including, but not limited to professionalism sanctions, drug/alcohol offenses, or warnings/sanctions from any department within HSC. Any disclosures or nondisclosures may delay, inhibit, or limit PA licensure. Potential violations of the UNTHSC Student Code of Conduct and Civility (“The Code”) will be referred to the Student Affairs

Office and may be reported to the Texas Medical Board (TMB). For more information, see Procedure No. 18: Physician Assistant Program Student Professionalism Violation

## PAS Program Student Health and Technical Standards

### **Americans with Disabilities Act**

HSC is committed to providing equal educational access for qualified students with disabilities in accordance with state and federal laws. HSC does not discriminate based on an individual's disability and complies with Section 504 and Public Law 101-336 (American with Disabilities Act) in its admissions, accessibility, treatment and employment of individuals in its programs and activities. The University of North Texas Health Science Center provides academic adjustments and auxiliary aids to individuals with disabilities, as defined under the law, who are otherwise qualified to meet the institution's academic and employment requirements. For more information, see Student Affairs Policy Manual.

### **PAS Program Student Health and Technical Standards**

All candidates must meet certain health and technical standards to participate in the physician assistant educational programs. Graduation signifies the graduate is prepared for entry into the practice of medicine as a physician assistant with the requisite knowledge and skills to function in a broad variety of clinical situations and provide a wide spectrum of patient care.

All students enrolled in the Physician Assistant Studies Program curriculum must meet certain health and technical standards to fully participate in the educational programs contained in the curriculum. A candidate for the Master of Physician Assistant Studies degree must have abilities and skills in six areas: observation, communication, motor, intellectual, behavioral, and environmental. Technological compensation can be made for some disabilities in certain areas, but for the majority, the candidate should be able to perform in a reasonably independent manner. The use of a trained intermediary requires a candidate's judgment to be mediated by someone else's power of selection and observation and is not a permissible accommodation.

By enrolling in the program and initiating each subsequent course, the student is certifying to the PAS Program their ability to meet the Health and Technical Standards. For more information, see PAS Procedure on Student Health and Technical Standards.

# PAS Program Philosophy

## Overview

The PAS program philosophy guides all policies and procedures in the PAS program. PAS students are required to understand, uphold, and adhere to the student responsibilities within the PAS program philosophy.

## PAS Program Philosophy

Our purpose is to graduate competent professionals, and we believe that student success is the result of full participation and cooperation between the program (i.e., policies, procedures, courses, faculty, and staff) and the student.

## PAS Program Responsibilities

- Provide clear and fair standards for educational components and student success.
- Conduct critical ongoing evaluation of program policies and procedures.
- Provide an environment conducive to learning and with honest and open communication.
- Know, support, and promote program philosophy, policies, and procedures.
- Display integrity and professionalism in attitudes, behaviors, and interactions (includes all HSC values)

## PAS Student Responsibilities

- Demonstrate self-responsibility, self-motivation, self-regulation, and effort in your learning.
- Continually assess own strengths, weaknesses, and barriers in learning and utilize resources for student success.
- Communicate honestly and openly any issues *prior to* major events or failures.
- Know and follow program philosophy, policies, and procedures.
- Display integrity and professionalism in attitudes, behaviors, and interactions (which include all HSC values).

## **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Program Definitions and Goals**

Diversity is defined as, all the ways that make people unique, encompassing characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. Some examples of diversity include, but are not limited to, age, religion, gender identity, socioeconomic status, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, race, disability, first generation college attendant, native language other than English, Veteran status and vocational experience. Equity is defined as, ensuring the right conditions are in place for each person to achieve their full potential. Inclusion is defined as, creating a culture and environment that recognizes, appreciates, and effectively utilizes the talents, skills, and perspectives of every individual. Belonging is defined as, an individual sense of acceptance and feeling valued as a member of a group.

The goals of the PA Studies Department to ensure diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging are as follows:

- Promote a diverse student body.
- Promote a diverse faculty and staff.
- Foster educational equity for HSC PA students.
- Foster workplace equity for HSC PAS faculty and staff.
- Cultivate an inclusive environment for students, faculty, and staff.

## **UNT Health Science Center Notice of Non-Discrimination**

The University of North Texas Health Science Center (HSC) is firmly committed to equal opportunity and does not permit – and takes actions to prevent – discrimination, harassment (including sexual violence, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking) and retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status in its application, employment practices and facilities; nor permits race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, veteran status, or sex discrimination and harassment in its admissions processes, and educational programs and activities. UNT System Administration promptly investigates complaints of discrimination, harassment and related retaliation, and takes remedial action when appropriate. System Administration also takes actions to prevent retaliation against individuals who oppose any form of harassment or discriminatory practice, file a charge or report, or testify, assist or participate in a related investigation or proceeding.

Any employee who experiences, observes or becomes aware of discrimination, sexual harassment or related retaliation must promptly report the incident(s) unless they are a licensed health care provider or a licensed counselor acting in this capacity as part of their official employment. Students and non-affiliated members of the public are encouraged to report incidents but not required.



Where to report discrimination, harassment (including sex-based) and retaliation:

Title VII Reporting Form – Discrimination, Harassment (including sex-based) and Related Retaliation

Title IX Reporting Form – Sexual Misconduct (sexual harassment and sexual violence), Dating Violence, Domestic Violence and Stalking

Online and Anonymous HSC TrustLine Reporting (except for Title IX) or (844) 692-6025

Designated official for complaints of discrimination, harassment (including sex-based) and related retaliation:

Wanda S. Boyd, Assistant Vice Chancellor of Equal Opportunity & ADA Coordinator

Wanda.Boyd@untsystem.edu | 214-571-2424

Designated official for complaints of sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence or stalking:

Dr. Maureen “Moe” McGuinness, Title IX Coordinator

Maureen.Mcguinness@untsystem.edu | 817-735-5919

Reports related to disability discrimination can also be made to the Office of EO at Report of Concern, HRS.EO@untsystem.edu or 972-338-

1416. Designated official for workplace accommodations is: Keeshala Henderson, Workplace

Administrator, Keeshala.Henderson@untsystem.edu.

What to report:

All known information about the incident that is relevant to the investigation, as well as whether the alleged victim expressed a desire for confidentiality in reporting the incident. If you have been designated by HSC as a “Confidential Employee” with whom employees or students may speak confidentially concerning sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence or stalking, you are only required to report the type of incident to the Title IX Coordinator. Similarly, if you receive information regarding sexual misconduct under circumstances that make the communications confidential or privileged by law (for example, you receive information as a licensed health care professional), you must report only the type of incident, but no information that would violate an employee’s or student’s expectation of privacy.

Mandatory requirement to report sexual misconduct:

State law requires all HSC employees to promptly report incidences of sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator that they learn about in the course and scope of their employment when the employee reasonably believes sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence or stalking) has been committed by or against an individual who was employed at HSC or enrolled as a student at the time

of the incident. This includes instances when individuals with no affiliation with HSC are either allegedly victimized by an HSC employee or student or are accused of committing an offense against an HSC employee or student.

#### Anonymous Reporters:

You may report without sharing your name by using the electronic reporting form found at Online and Anonymous TrustLine Reporting. Your report will be forwarded to the appropriate HSC staff or university official for review. Depending on the amount of information disclosed, the ability to investigate and respond to the report may be limited.

#### Sanctions:

Employees who fail to report suspected sexual assault will be terminated. Additionally, an employee who fails to report may be charged with a Class A Misdemeanor punishable by up to one year in jail, a fine of up to \$4,000 or both (jail time and a fine.) Employees or students who are victims of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence or stalking are not required to report incidents involving themselves.

#### Reporting to Law Enforcement:

Anyone who has experienced or witnessed Sexual Misconduct (sexual harassment and sexual violence), Dating Violence, Domestic Violence and Stalking has the right to choose whether to report the behavior to law enforcement instead of or in addition to reporting to the Health Science Center. The Assistant Vice Chancellor of Equal Opportunity and Title IX Coordinator can assist in making a report to law enforcement authorities.

A complainant or reporter may also choose to decline to notify law enforcement. A report to law enforcement, even to HSC Police Department, is separate from a report to the Office of Equal Opportunity or to the Title IX Coordinator. An individual pursues administrative disciplinary remedies by reporting to HSC and criminal remedies by reporting to law enforcement.

#### For emergencies:

- Call: 911

#### For non-emergencies and to report to or contact local and surrounding law enforcement:

- UNT Police Department: 940-565-3000
- UNT Dallas Police Department: 972-780-3000
- UNT Health Science Center Police Department: 817-735-2210
- Dallas Police Department: 214-671-4500

- Fort Worth Police Department: 817-392-4222
- Dallas County Sheriff's Office: 214-749-8641
- Frisco Police Department: 972-292-6010

Reporting to Outside Agencies:

Individuals may file a complaint at any time with state or federal civil rights offices, including, but not limited to, the U. S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Texas Workforce Commission's Civil Rights Division, the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights and the U.S. Department of Justice as follows:

Texas Workforce Commission Civil Rights Division  
Texas Workforce Commission  
101 E. 15th St.  
Austin, Texas 78778  
800-628-5115

US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission  
U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission  
131 M St. NE  
Washington, D.C. 20507  
1-800-669-4000/ 1-800-669-6820 (TTY) / 1-844-234-5122 (ASL Video Phone) [info@eeoc.gov](mailto:info@eeoc.gov)

Office for Civil Rights – U.S. Department of Education  
U.S. Department of Education  
Office for Civil Rights  
Lyndon Baines Johnson Department of Education Bldg.  
400 Maryland Ave. SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-1100

Telephone: 800-421-3481  
Fax: 202-453-6012; TDD: 800-877-8339  
Email: [OCR@ed.gov](mailto:OCR@ed.gov)

#### Reporting abuse and neglect:

Anyone who has a reasonable cause to believe a child, or person 65 years or older, or an adult with disabilities is being abused, neglected or exploited must report it to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) according to Texas laws. A person who reports abuse in good faith is immune from civil or criminal liability. DFPS keeps the name of the person making the report confidential. Anyone who does not report suspected abuse can be held liable for a misdemeanor or felony.

Phone: 800-252-5400

Online: Texas Abuse Hotline

#### Related policies & resources:

HSC Policies

1.107 Title IX

5.106 Prohibition Against Discrimination, Sexual Misconduct, Harassment and Related Retaliation

5.114 Workplace Religious Accommodations

05.203 Employment of Persons with Disabilities

Rights, Resources & Options (Support and resources)

Employee Resources

Please direct questions about this notice to the UNT System Office of Equal Opportunity at [HRS.EO@untsystem.edu](mailto:HRS.EO@untsystem.edu) or 214-571-2427.

## **PAS Program Curriculum**

### **Overview**

The PAS program curriculum is designed to ensure PAS students meet the expected entry-level PA graduate competencies published by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA), in conjunction with the American Academy of Physician Associates (AAPA), the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA), and the Accreditation Review Commission for the Education of Physician Assistants (ARC-PA). Entry-level competences cover areas of medical knowledge, interpersonal and communication skills, patient care, professionalism, practice-based learning and improvement, and systems-based practice. Expected graduate competencies can be found on the PAS program website [linked here](#).

The PAS program is a full-time program that will leave little to no time for outside employment. There are two phases of the PAS program curriculum: the Didactic Phase and the Clinical Phase. More information about the PAS program curriculum can be found on the PAS program website [linked here](#).

## **Didactic Curriculum**

The didactic phase of the curriculum occurs from Fall semester of Year 1 to Spring semester of Year 2 and includes classroom coursework (approx. 20 course hours per long semester) in overview courses, basic sciences courses, and clinical medicine courses.

### Foundation Courses

The Foundation Courses include Approach to PA Practice, Principles of Evidence Based Medicine, Clinical Anatomy, Neuroanatomy, Human Physiology, Medical Interviewing, Physical Examination Skills, Introduction to Disease, and Introduction to Pharmacology.

### Clinical Medicine Courses

The Clinical Medicine courses include Hematology, Head, Eyes, Ears, Nose, & Throat, Endocrinology, Neurology and Lab Medicine, Gastroenterology, Dermatology, Genitourinary, Cardiovascular Medicine 1, Cardiovascular Medicine 2, Women's Health, Musculoskeletal System, Pulmonology, Pediatric Medicine, Emergency Medicine, Fundamentals of Behavioral Science, Geriatrics, Clinical Skills and Clinical Integrated Medicine (CIM 1-4).

### Master's Project

Master's Project is a capstone project that will be completed during the clinical phase. It is designed to assess the student's understanding and application of evidence-based medicine. The project may include written case studies/presentations or other written research projects/papers that may be submitted for publication. PAS students will learn more about the content and timing of Master's Project as they near the clinical phase of the curriculum.

### Senior Seminar

Senior seminar is a summative evaluation course designed to assess the graduate competencies required for entry into the PA profession in the areas of knowledge base, patient management skills, and professionalism. Presentations, lectures, and workshops are provided during

the course to assist students in preparing for the PA National Certifying Examination after graduation. PAS students will learn more about the content and timing of Senior Seminar as they near the clinical phase of the curriculum.

#### Clinical Rotations

See Supervised Clinical Practice Experience (SCPE) Student Handbook for additional information.

#### Dual Degrees

In addition to your PA education, students may elect to work toward a Master of Public Health (MPH) and Master of Health Administration (MHA). For more information on the dual degree program, [click here](#).

## **PAS Program Remediation**

### **Overview**

Students enrolled in the PAS Program must meet the academic and professional standards established by the PAS Program in order to progress through the didactic and clinical phases of the program. PAS students who fail a course in the didactic or clinic phase of training, must successfully remediate the failed course and otherwise remain eligible to continue in the PAS Program. For more information on course remediation, see Physician Assistant Remediation Procedure.

## **PAS Program Promotion, Probation, and Dismissal**

### **Overview**

Students enrolled in the Physician Assistant Studies Program must meet the academic and professional standards established by the Physician Assistant Studies Program to be eligible for promotion and to graduate as noted in this procedure. Students who do not meet standards are subject to probation or dismissal. To be eligible for promotion, the student must meet the requirements of each course in all respective semesters of the curriculum. For more information, see Physician Assistant Promotion, Probation, Dismissal Procedure Manual.

## **Suspensions and Expulsions**

### **Overview**

Suspension and expulsions are considered disciplinary sanction, and these sanctions will be notated on the student transcript. “Suspension” means temporary separation from the institution for serious or repeated misconduct. “Expulsion” means permanent separation from the institution because of serious misconduct. For more information, see The Student Code of Conduct and Civility (“The Code”).

## **PAS Faculty Roles**

### **PAS Principal Faculty**

PAS principal faculty members develop, coordinate, and monitor student instruction and clinical experiences in the PAS program. They serve as Faculty Advisors, Course Directors or Liaisons, guest speakers, and faculty course support in the didactic and clinical phases of the curriculum.

### **PAS Faculty Advisors**

Upon matriculation into the PAS program, each PAS student is randomly assigned a Faculty Advisor from the PAS faculty. The role of the advisor is to encourage PAS students, offer advice regarding academic or professional issues, and direct them to campus academic resources. Per ARC-PA accreditation standards, faculty advisors are not allowed to provide medical or personal advice. Additionally, faculty, staff, or other PA department employees may not be involved in student medical care (except in a medical emergency). It is required for PAS students to meet with their faculty advisors during the didactic phase at regularly scheduled intervals. PAS students can request additional sessions as needed. PAS administrative staff will schedule mandatory advising appointments according to student and faculty schedules.

### **PAS Course Director or PAS Course Liaison**

Each PAS course is assigned a PAS Course Director when the course is delivered by the PAS program, or a PAS Course Liaison when the course is delivered by another HSC department. The role of the Course Director or Liaison is to ensure that course and exam content are relevant, accurate, current, organized, and evidence based. Course Directors or Liaisons are also responsible for the development, coordination, conduct, and/or support of course syllabi, course activities, and course schedules. All PAS student questions, comments, or concerns about PAS course content and conduct should be directed first to the PAS Course Director or Liaison, if no resolution the student should contact the DAE and then the Program Director.

### **PAS Adjunct Faculty**

PAS adjunct faculty members are healthcare providers who facilitate students' learning. They serve as guest speakers and faculty course support in the didactic and clinical phases of the curriculum.

### **Instructional Faculty**

Instructional faculty members are individuals providing instruction or supervision during the didactic and/or clinical phases of the program, regardless of length of time of instruction, faculty status or rank.

### **PAS Faculty Administration**

Some PAS principal faculty have faculty administrative roles in the PAS program, including the following:

#### **Program Director**

The Program Director (PD) is responsible for the overall management and direction of the PA Program, including provision of oversight, supervision, and coordination of all employees, staff, and program activities. The PD determines resources available to the faculty and oversees the program budget. The PD provides direction in all aspects of student selection, admission, progress, and evaluation of academic and behavioral matters. The PD identifies and implements requirements for maintaining program accreditation and evaluates the effectiveness of the program staff, employees, curriculum, and improvement efforts.

#### **Medical Director**



The Medical Director is responsible for assuring didactic and supervised clinical practice experiences meet current practice standards relative to the role of the PA in providing patient care. The Medical Director is involved in developing the program's mission statement, providing instruction to students, and evaluating student performance. The Medical Director participates in designing, implementing, coordinating, and evaluating the curriculum and program.

#### Associate Program Director

The Associate Program Director (APD) works closely in collaboration with the PD. The APD is responsible for oversight of implementation and documentation of ongoing processes related to self-assessment in accordance with the ARC-PA standards and works closely with the Program Enhancement Committee (PEC). The APD develops and implements methods for evaluating and tracking student progress. This responsibility includes, but is not limited to, ensuring student advising is timely and appropriate, tracking student performance on PACKRAT and PANCE, and developing strategies for improvement in these areas. The APD will serve as a committee member of the curriculum committee, Program Enhancement Committee (PEC), and chairs the Student Performance Committee (SPC) and PA Studies Accreditation Committee (PAS-AC). The APD assumes the duties of the PD when the PD is out of office or unavailable.

#### Director of Academic Education

The Director of Academic Education (DAE) is responsible for the didactic semesters of the program. The DAE works with course directors to design, implement, coordinate, schedule, and evaluate educational activities taking place in the didactic phase of the curriculum. The DAE is directly responsible for the scheduling of the didactic courses, course sequencing, and evaluating student performance. The DAE provides oversight and direction to course directors regarding course content, methods used to deliver course content, and course assessments. The DAE will serve as a committee member of the Curriculum Committee. Major changes are coordinated between the DAE, Curriculum Committee, and the PD. The DAE ensures that didactic courses are evaluated by course directors at the end of each semester and tracks the effectiveness of changes made to those courses.

#### Director of Clinical Education

The Director of Clinical Education (DCE) is responsible for the clinical year of the program. This includes scheduling of Supervised Clinical Practice Experience (SCPE) courses including sequencing and ensuring the availability of clinical sites. The DCE works directly with clinical

course directors to implement, coordinate, schedule, and evaluate educational activities taking place in the clinical phase of the curriculum. Major changes are coordinated between the DCE, the Curriculum Committee, and the PD. The DCE is responsible for ensuring that SCPE courses and preceptors are evaluated at the conclusion of courses/rotations and for tracking the effectiveness of changes made. The DCE evaluates effectiveness of preceptors, clinical site coordinators, regional clinical hub coordinators, and clinical project managers.

#### Course Directors

Course Directors are responsible for planning and delivering instruction within courses, supervising content delivery in the courses, drafting course syllabi, and gaining approval of course syllabi from the PA Curriculum Committee. Course Directors are expected to plan how courses are delivered and to recruit additional faculty and guest speakers who will assist them in meeting the course goals. For SCPEs, Clinical Course Directors monitor students' logs and time-tracking. All Course Directors ensure that course goals and objectives are defined and fulfilled according to the approved course syllabus. Course Directors ensure that students are accurately and fairly graded in their course(s) according to grading components outlined in the course syllabus. Course Directors are expected to regularly consult with and communicate with the DAE and DCE to ensure expectations related to course delivery and student assessments are met. At the conclusion of each course, the Course Director will evaluate the course and all its components by using the Post-Course Evaluation.

## **PAS Program Staff Roles and the PAS Office Suite**

### **PAS Program Staff**

The administrative staff of the PAS Program help make PAS operations and activities run smoothly. The staff positions include the following.

#### Business Coordinator

The Business Coordinator provides administrative support to the PAS Program Director (PD) and acts as office manager for the PAS department. The Business Coordinator will work with PAS student officers on budgets and supplies for activities during the didactic and clinical phases of the curriculum.

#### Administrative Coordinator

The Administrative Coordinator provides administrative support for the PAS Department. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, course scheduling, assisting with course activities, accreditation support, greeting those that enter the PAS office suite, fielding questions, setting PAS student appointments with PAS faculty, and directing PAS students toward appropriate persons or resources.

#### Clinical Site Coordinator

The Clinical Site Coordinator works with the Director of Clinical Education (DCE) to build relationships with the community by establishing and maintaining rotation sites for the clinical phase of the curriculum. The Clinical Site Coordinator works with PAS students if needed to establish student-identified rotation sites.

#### Senior Project Coordinator

The Senior Project Coordinator works with the DCE and Clinical Site Coordinator to schedule clinical rotations during the clinical phase of the curriculum. The Senior Project Coordinator will interact with PAS students in assigning clinical rotations.

### **PAS Office Suite**

The PAS program office suite houses the PAS faculty and staff offices and is located on the Interdisciplinary Research and Education Building (IREB) 4th floor.

#### Assistance

The PAS front office is staffed by an administrative support team member during hours of operation. If front desk staff are unavailable, other staff members are notified of visitors through video monitoring of the front office area. All PAS students should check in at the front desk.

#### Making Appointments with Faculty or the PD

Because PAS faculty schedules vary, PAS students are best served by making an appointment to speak with faculty as opposed to “dropping in”. To make an appointment with a PAS faculty member or the PD, email them directly, email [pastudies@unthsc.edu](mailto:pastudies@unthsc.edu) or call 817-735-2301. Any staff member can make the appointment.

### **Department of Physician Assistant Studies Contact Information**

Department of Physician Assistant Studies  
UNT Health Science Center, IREB Building

3430 Camp Bowie Blvd, Fort Worth, TX 76107  
Fort Worth, TX 76107-2699

Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Phone: 817-735-2301

Fax: 817-735-2529

Email: [pastudies@UNTHSC.edu](mailto:pastudies@UNTHSC.edu)

## **PAS Student Identification**

### **Student ID Badges**

HSC will issue each student an ID badge with an embedded microchip which allows access to certain doors as well as parking garages. The PAS program also uses ID badges for identification for proctored exams. Students are required to wear ID badges in a visible location while on campus. Replacement ID badges are available for a fee. Contact Campus Police for a replacement.

### **PAS Student Name Tags**

The PAS program will issue PAS students a magnetic name plate that must be worn on the upper left breast pocket of the student's white coat at any event where the name tag is necessary (i.e., the student is representing the PA Program or HSC). During the clinical phase of the curriculum, PAS students are required to wear these name tags, which identify the wearer as a physician assistant student, unless otherwise directed by the individual rotation. Replacement name tags will be available for a fee. To order a replacement, contact the PAS Department.

### **Contact Information/Name Changes**

Changes to personal information, including contact information and name changes, are processed by the Office of the Registrar and distributed to the appropriate academic and administrative units of HSC. It is the student's responsibility to purchase a new ID badge and name tag if there is a name change.

### **Background Checks for Students**

A background check is required for all PAS Students upon matriculation into the program. This policy is designed to provide a safe environment for the patients and clients at HSC and affiliated training sites. Background checks allow the university to evaluate whether

HSC students are qualified, eligible, and possess the character and fitness to participate in off-site programs (i.e., clinical care and/or clinical rotation sites). For more information, see Physician Assistant Student Involvement in Patient Care Activities.

## **PAS Program Student Dress Code Policy**

### **White Coat**

The University provides a short white coat to students prior to the White Coat Ceremony. The HSC university patch will be provided by the University. The student is responsible for ensuring the patch is sewn onto the upper right side of the coat. The student must always wear their HSC student badge above the upper left pocket of their coat. The student has the option to have their coat embroidered with their name and credentials at the student's expense. On the upper left side of the coat, the student must have their name on the first line and "Physician Assistant Student" on the second line. If the student desires the addition of pronouns, a third line may be added. The embroidery must be in black thread and Helvetica font. If the student desires to purchase an additional white coat at their expense, the embroidery must follow the same guidelines. The additional HSC University patch can be purchased from the University.

### **Didactic Phase**

The PAS program dress code policy for the didactic phase of the curriculum is detailed below.

#### General Attire

- PAS students are expected to convey a professional appearance and are expected to be neat and clean.
- Unless otherwise instructed by PAS Course Directors or Course Liaisons, PAS students are required to wear solid-colored scrubs in the color assigned to their class cohort to all course activities Monday through Thursday.
- Unless otherwise instructed by PAS Course Directors or Course Liaisons, PAS students may wear either their solid-colored scrubs or PAS program shirts with jeans/khakis on Fridays.
- PAS students may be required to wear their clean white lab coats to specific labs or other official functions.

### Skills Lab/OSCE Attire

On days noted in the schedule with “lab attire required,” students should wear the following modest clothing:

- Shorts and a **full-length** T-shirt/tank top **MUST** be worn.
- Sports bras **MUST** be worn rather than a regular bra.
- PAS students must wear scrubs or T-shirts over the above clothing when they are not serving as the “patient.”
- PAS students may use a gown to drape areas not being examined when acting as the “patient”.
- When appropriate, students must also wear the appropriate safety gear such as goggles, gloves, lab coat, and footwear as approved by the lab supervisor and HSC Safety Office.
- If a course activity requires a specific attire, follow the course director's instructions for what to wear/not wear.
- Exceptions to the above must be approved by the Course Director.

### Violations of PAS Student Dress Code

Students in violation of the dress code may be asked to immediately leave to change into appropriate attire.

If a PAS student dress code violation occurs at times of graded activities, no additional time will be given to complete any activity while the student changes to appropriate attire.

### Clinical Phase

Information pertaining to dress code in the clinical phase is in the SCPE Student Handbook.

### PAS Program Attendance Procedure

For more information regarding attendance during the didactic and clinical phase, see PAS Attendance Procedure.

### Religious Holiday Absences

Requests must be made in writing within the first week of the semester to Course Directors and the DAE when requesting an absence for a religious holiday. Course activities and materials may be scheduled for an alternate date to ensure student success.

## **PAS Student Use of Technology in the PAS Program**

### **Laptops**

All incoming PAS students receive an HSC-issued technology package during the HSC Student Orientation, which includes a laptop. The technology package is included in student fees and is owned by the student thereafter. PAS students will use their HSC-issued laptops daily to access PAS course and program information and to send/receive PAS program communications. HSC-issued laptops are required for testing and evaluation in the courses. It is the responsibility of the PAS student to ensure their HSC-issued laptop is always in good working order in both the didactic and clinical phases of the curriculum.

### **Email Use – Official Form of Communication**

Email is the official mode of communication on the HSC campus. PAS students will be assigned a university email address during the HSC Student Orientation. All students must have a working university email address. Students must use it for university-related business and check it multiple times daily to maintain current information for PAS program and course information. Use of personal email addresses is not acceptable. Information regarding the PAS program, courses, course assignments, and any changes will be communicated to the PAS students through university email or the university learning management system.

### **E\*Value™**

E\*Value™ is a cloud-based system that the PAS program uses to schedule and track PAS program activities, document student meetings with Faculty, and to document any student issues. Information about E\*Value™ will be distributed at the HSC Student Orientation. PAS students will use E\*Value™ to access semester calendars and course schedules, maintain resume information, and upload certifications. PAS students in the clinical phase of the curriculum will use E\*Value™ to log patient encounters and hours worked in clinical rotations.

For more information regarding E\*Value™, email: [pastudies@UNTHSC.edu](mailto:pastudies@UNTHSC.edu).

## Canvas™

Canvas™ is a learning management system free to all HSC students. The PAS program requires that all PAS students become familiar with Canvas™ technical requirements, features, and other information needed to have a successful online learning experience.

Each PAS course will have its own Canvas™ course that contains the course syllabus, lecture information, handouts, assignments, quizzes, grading, assessment rubrics, assignment dates, and other elements critical to the course. Canvas notifications are used for communication with students during their course and must be enabled by the student.

## Artificial Intelligence

Per the Student Code of Conduct & Civility (“The Code”), “use of any unauthorized assistance in academic and professional assessments (e.g. board exams, end of rotation exams, certification exams, etc.), including graded or ungraded coursework, research, quizzes, tests or examinations”, is prohibited. As such, the use of an artificial intelligence (AI) generator such as ChatGPT, iA Writer, MidJourney, DALL-E, etc. is explicitly prohibited **unless otherwise noted by the instructor**. The information derived from these tools is based on previously published materials. Therefore, using these tools without proper citation constitutes plagiarism. Additionally, be aware that the information derived from these tools is often inaccurate or incomplete. It is imperative that all work submitted should be the student’s own work. Any assignment that is found to have been plagiarized or to have used unauthorized AI tools may receive a zero and/or be reported for academic misconduct.

## IT Helpdesk and Client Services

The HSC Helpdesk has desktop and peripheral support and routes service requests to ITS departments as appropriate. Students may access The Helpdesk by phone 817-735-2192. For more information regarding IT and Helpdesk, see their website linked here: [UNTHSC ITS](#)

## PAS Student Use of Electronic Devices During Class Time

Computers and similar devices (e.g., notebooks, iPads, smartphones, etc.) may be used in class for class-related activities as determined by the PAS Course Director or Liaison.

Using the computer for non-course-related activities during class time including, but not limited to, web-surfing, playing games, texting, instant messaging, shopping, and social media, is unprofessional and distracting.



Audio or visual recording is not permitted without the prior approval of the PAS Course Director, Liaison, or individual lecturer.

Cell phones must be turned off or placed on “silent” mode during PAS course activities. If a PAS student anticipates the need to take a call during class time, it is advised to notify the lecturer prior to the start of class.

## **PAS Program Course Set Up**

### **PAS Course Enrollment**

PAS students do not need to manually register for courses; this is performed at the program level with the Registrar. All PAS students in an incoming cohort will attend every course together sequentially.

### **Didactic Phase**

PAS course activities during the didactic phase of the curriculum are conducted Monday through Friday during normal business hours, which are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Daily schedules vary by course, but typically PAS students have one course in the morning and one in the afternoon. With rare exception, all PAS courses in the didactic phase are conducted on the HSC campus. **PAS students are required to be available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. for PAS program activities. Class times during this 8-hour period are subject to change and may vary.**

### **Housing and Transportation**

PAS students are solely responsible for securing housing and transportation for all PAS course activities, including course activities during the clinical phase of the curriculum. The PAS program and/or HSC are NOT responsible to locate or pay any portion of student housing or transportation during on-campus or off-campus educational activities.

### **PAS Course Syllabi**

Academic standards for successful completion of each PAS course are contained in the course syllabi. Each PAS course syllabus will specify all the course requirements, including academic assignments, evaluation and grading schemes, and schedule of course activities.

Modifications to PAS course requirements, grading schemes, and schedules may be made when the PAS program deems changes are necessary to improve instruction or to conform to scholastic regulations of the department, school, or university.

PAS students are required to read thoroughly each PAS course syllabus prior to beginning the respective course and to consult the syllabus during the course for all course-related questions. PAS course syllabi can be found online in the appropriate PAS Canvas™ Course.

### **PAS Course Textbooks and Equipment**

Specific textbooks and equipment required for a PAS course will be identified in the PAS course syllabus. Most textbooks and equipment are already included in PAS course fees. **Any questions about course-related textbooks or equipment should be directed to the PAS Course Director or Liaison.**

PAS students are expected to read any required textbooks and are encouraged to read any recommended textbooks to ensure that they have the knowledge needed to be successful in the course.

PAS students should read the manuals that come with the equipment to learn basic functioning, such as how to properly insert the ear buds of the stethoscope, “turn on” the bell or diaphragm of the stethoscope or turn on and dim or brighten the otoscope/ophthalmoscope). In addition, equipment with batteries should be charged prior to use (i.e., prior to class). Students should contact equipment manufacturer for replacement parts.

### **PAS Program Course Activities**

#### **PAS Course Content Dissemination**

Course content dissemination is at the discretion of the course director and may occur in a variety of modalities as outlined in the course syllabus.

#### **PAS Course Assessment**

Course assessments are determined by the course director and may occur in a variety of modalities. Check the course syllabus for details on assessments for that course.

### **PAS Course Evaluation**

Following each course, a Course and Faculty Evaluation will be provided for the purpose of providing constructive feedback. For information on the HSC procedures for the collection and use of student evaluations of courses and instructors, see the University Procedure: Course and Instructor Evaluation, P7.xxx-1 on UNTHSC Policy Tech Website.

### **PAS Program Exam Policies and Procedures**

Students are required to comply with TES exam procedures and policies and PAS policies.

Written exams may be administered on paper, Scantron, or electronically. Electronic exams require the use of an HSC issued computer equipped with Examplify™ software. PAS students will be instructed about how to download and use Examplify™ during the HSC Student Orientation.

PAS students must always have a student identification badge with them in order to be admitted to and remain in testing areas. All on-campus PAS exams are proctored. PAS students must comply with test proctor directions. If there is a discrepancy between test proctor directions and student expectations during the exam, the student is to follow test proctor directions and address the issue later with the PAS Course Director or Liaison.

A PAS student who arrives late will be allowed to take the examination (with no extra time allowed) provided no other student has already turned in an exam. If a student is late to a test there may be a penalty of 10% off their final test grade.

PAS students arriving after the first examination has been turned in will have to contact the PAS Course Director or Liaison to discuss the potential for a make-up exam.

PAS student tardiness to and/or unexcused absence from OSCEs typically cannot be made up.

### **No Reproduction or Distribution of Exam Items or Content**

Any reproduction or distribution of exam content will constitute a violation of the Student Code of Conduct & Civility (“The Code”) and will result in disciplinary proceedings.

### **Exam Feedback**

Exam grades are posted in the gradebook on Canvas. Students will also receive a “Strengths and Opportunities Report” for all Exemplify™ administered exams.

### **The PAS Student Performance Committee (PAS-SPC)**

The PAS-SPC is composed of faculty from around the HSC campus. These dedicated faculty members monitor student academic performance throughout the learner’s academic enrollment in the PA program. Using a proactive approach, the PAS-SPC uses referrals and contacts with the Student Center, CARE Team, and other campus resources to help improve learner performance. Students may be referred to the PAS-SPC by faculty, staff, or may self-refer.

## **PAS Student Appeals**

### **Grade Appeals**

For more information, see Physician Assistant Grade Appeals Procedure and the UNTHSC Student Affairs Policy Manual.

### **Failing Course Grade**

If a PAS student fails a PAS course, the student will appear before the PAS Student Performance Committee (PAS-SPC).

### **Appeal of Dismissal**

If a PAS student is dismissed from the PAS program, the student can file an appeal with the Dean of the College of Health Professions within 5 business days of the decision by the PAS Program Director. For information, see Physician Assistant Promotion, Probation, Dismissal Procedure Manual & CHP Dismissal Appeal Process in appendix

## **PAS Student Options for Leave of Absence and Withdrawal**

### **Leave of Absence**

Students enrolled in academic programs within the College of Health Professions are permitted to request leave of absence due to a medical condition or for personal reasons. Leave of absence for personal reasons cannot be granted if the student is not in good standing at the time the request is made.

### **Returning from Leave of Absence**

Students returning from a leave of absence may be required to complete additional coursework or testing to meet the academic requirements of the program.

A revised educational plan will be developed and provided to the student returning from a leave of absence. This plan may include, but will not be limited to, repeating courses, auditing courses, and/or completing new courses and/or assessments. The purpose of the revised plan is to prepare the student to resume progress in the program, complete remaining courses or activities in the program, and/or improve the student's chances for success in the program. A student may be required to repeat all or a portion of previously completed aspects of the curriculum upon their return. The program director retains approval over any requirements that are part of an approved remediation plan or a revised academic schedule.

All courses that were successfully completed with a grade of "A," "B," or "Pass" will be audited. Courses that resulted in a "C" or an "F" within the educational block in which the leave of absence was initiated, with the exception of the year 1 fall semester, are eligible to be retaken. If a leave of absence is taken during the year 1 fall semester, students may retake courses that resulted in a "C" during that semester. All other courses that resulted in a "C" prior to the educational block in which the leave of absence was initiated are not eligible to be retaken and will be audited.

Grades earned in retaken courses will replace the original grades on the student's transcript for those courses, except in the case of courses that resulted in an "F." *PAS Procedure No. 2: Physician Assistant Course Remediation* procedure will apply to courses taken and completed with a grade of "F" during the fall 1 semester or educational block in which the leave of absence was taken. If the course is successfully

remediated, the grade of “F” will be replaced by “C.” The grades earned for courses that are retaken will be posted on the transcript with both prior and current grades reflected. Only the remediated grade will be calculated into the cumulative GPA.

All courses that have not yet been completed by the student, have had content changes since prior enrollment, and/or in which the student has been issued an “I” or “W” grade will be required to be taken for a grade to complete the program. Substantial course content changes necessary for the student’s overall achievement of competency, as determined by the faculty, may require the student to retake previously passed courses.

Students must maintain academic and professional competency in all courses that are audited. Knowledge base must be maintained at an audited passing grade of “A”, “B”, or “pass”. Audited grades are not reflected on the transcript. If academic and professionalism competencies are not demonstrated in all course work, the program may assign additional work to ensure all competencies are met. For more information, see Physician Assistant Leave of Absence Procedure & CHP LOA process in Appendix

### **Withdrawal and Absence due to Military Service**

Active-duty withdrawal and excused absence policy is located under policies: Withdrawal for Active Military Service and Military Leave of Absence.

### **PAS Student Academic Resources**

Students may self-refer to any academic service and may contact their advisor for additional resources.

#### **Center for Academic Performance (CAP)**

The Center for Academic Performance offers services designed to enhance any and all levels of academic performance through academic consultations, learning assessments, and self-management. Consultation with CAP can be self-initiated. CAP offers the following to all HSC students: academic counseling, learning and study strategy assessment, writing support, tutoring, and workshops. CAP Contact Information:

Center for Academic Performance

Hours of operation: Monday – Friday 8am – 5 pm Phone 817-735-2531

Fax: 817-735-0263

[CAP@UNTHSC.edu](mailto:CAP@UNTHSC.edu)

## Resources to Augment Learning

- CAP <https://www.unthsc.edu/center-for-academic-performance/>
- Library <https://library.unthsc.edu/>

## Student Success Scholarships

When funding is available, the department may sponsor scholarships for attendance to professional meetings and activities as well as membership in professional organizations such as the American Academy of Physician Associates (AAPA) and the Texas Academy of Physician Assistants (TAPA).

## PAS Student Communication and Professionalism

PAS students concerned about their performance need to communicate those concerns with the course director and/or their academic advisor. Students may also contact academic support resources previously mentioned in the handbook. An email to PAS faculty is usually answered within 2 business days. Holidays, emergencies, and special events may increase the expected response time. Faculty contact hours are outlined in each course syllabus. **PAS students are expected to respond promptly and respectfully to emails sent by PAS faculty and staff members.** Students are encouraged to extend professional courtesy by acknowledging responses to requests and questions. It is good practice to re-read an email prior to sending and avoid sending emails when frustrated or upset. Writing in all capitals can often be interpreted as 'yelling' and should also be avoided. It is important that PAS students maintain professionalism in all personal, classroom, and laboratory interactions with PAS faculty, staff, and students.

## PAS Student Organizations

Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) will be at the Welcome Week Fair each year. Information on the Welcome Week fair will be given during orientation. It is usually the week before the White Coat Ceremony. All student organization T-shirt or other designs must be approved by the faculty director of the organization and the UNTHSC Office of Marketing and Communication, per their guidelines. A listing and additional information of student organizations can be found at [this link](#).

### **Physician Assistant Student Association (PASA)**

The Physician Assistant Student Association is a registered student society with SAAPA, the Student Association of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA). PASA aims to encourage academic achievement and clinical excellence and promote PAs as members of the health care delivery team. All current HSC PA students are full and equal members of PASA. PASA Student Council includes PASA Executive Board, State and National student representatives and class officer positions.

<b>PASA Executive Board</b>	<b>State and National Student Representatives</b>	<b>Class Officers from each cohort</b>
1. President 2. Vice President 3. Secretary 4. Treasurer	1. SAR Junior Representative 2. SAR Senior Representative 3. TAPA Junior Representative 4. TAPA Senior Representative 5. SDCR 6. Historian 7. Outreach Chair	1. President 2. Vice President 3. Secretary 4. Treasurer 5. Activity Chair 6. Student Advocate 7. Honor Code Representative 8. Historian 9. Health/Wellness Coordinator

Students interested in running for an elected officer position must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Active student members of both AAPA and TAPA
- No academic probation
- No professionalism infractions



Elections are held at different times depending on the elected office. The Class Officers shall take office immediately upon their election and hold office until graduation. The PASA Executive Board and State and National Representatives shall take office in the January following their election and shall hold office for one year.

#### **PAS Class Officers**

Students may run for class officer positions during the first year. Class officer positions include President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, PASA Representative, Activity Chair, and Honor Code Representative. Elections are conducted through PASA, with positions being re-elected in the spring of the second year. Students on academic probation are not eligible to hold office in sanctioned student groups and are expected to resign from any elected or appointed positions held.

#### **PA Clinical Organization (PACO)**

The Physician Assistant Clinical Organization seeks to represent and educate those interested in various specialties through physician/PA presentations, skill workshops, and provide opportunities to explore various clinical fields. All current HSC PA students are open to join PACO. All PACO members must pay a one-time fee at the time they join. Students interested in running for an elected officer position (i.e., President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer) must meet the following eligibility requirements: No academic probation & no professionalism infractions. All elected office positions have a term of office of one year but are eligible for re-election.

#### **PA Student Professional Organizations**

##### **Student Academy/AAPA**

The American Academy of PAs (AAPA) is the national professional society for PAs in the United States. PASA is a chapter of the Student Academy of AAPA. To participate in AAPA activities and sponsored events, PASA is required to have 75% of the three PAS classes as paid members of AAPA. The fee for joining as a student covers all membership dues until graduation. For more information on AAPA and the Student Academy, see the following websites: <http://www.aapa.org/> or <http://www.aapa.org/student-academy>. Attending the AAPA conferences is not automatically considered an excused absence so request permission to attend from PAS Course Directors or Liaisons.

## **TAPA**

The Texas Academy of Physician Assistants (TAPA) is the state professional society for PAs. Students are encouraged to join, and the one-time Student Membership fee is \$25. Following graduation, special Membership Upgrade rates through TAPA are available for the first six months post-graduation. Students are encouraged to attend the TAPA conference where students are allowed to participate in Challenge Bowl. Attending the TAPA conferences is not automatically considered an excused absence so request permission to attend from PAS Course Directors or Liaisons.

For more information, [click here](#).

## **PAS Student Extracurricular Activities**

### **HSC Student Programs and Events**

For more information of what Student Development has to offer, go to <https://www.HSC.edu/students/student-development/>.

All student organization T-shirt or other designs must be approved by the faculty director of the organization and the UNTHSC Office of Marketing and Communication, per their guidelines.

### **PA Week**

PA Week is held every year in early October nationally. This week is dedicated to PAs and helps promote the PA profession and the value of PAs to our community.

### **Mission Trips**

During Spring Break, a variety of local and student groups may sponsor medical mission trips abroad. This is not at HSC or PAS program sponsored event. Meetings for the medical mission trip typically begin in early fall, and space is limited. Cost per student depends on the location and duration of the trip.

## **PA Didactic Achievement Banquet**

Second year PA classes often host a celebration for their transition to the clinical year. This event is attended, sponsored, and planned by the second year PA students.

### **PAS Career Fair**

This is an annual event for the third-year PAS students in which employers and recruiters of Physician Assistants from around the state of Texas come to campus to meet with prospective applicants.

## **PAS Student Promotion Activities**

### **PAS Graduation Banquet**

This annual banquet honors the graduating class. It is held for the graduating class prior to annual commencement. PAS Program academic awards are given at the banquet, which is jointly planned between the PAS program and the senior class banquet committee.

### **PAS Graduation/Commencement**

The commencement ceremony takes place in May and honors graduates of HSC. Distinguished guests, speakers, family members and friends are invited to join in celebration of our students' hard work and achievements as they prepare to begin the next chapter in their professional lives. PAS students are encouraged dress in business or formal attire and official regalia to attend the graduation ceremony.

### **White Coat Ceremony**

Shortly after matriculation into the program, students will participate in the White Coat Ceremony. The University provides a short white coat to students prior to the white coat ceremony. This ceremony is a tradition symbolizing the transition into being a member of the healthcare profession. For more information regarding the white coat dress code, go to the Didactic Student Handbook section labeled "White Coat" in the PAS Program Student Dress Code Policy.

## **PAS Student Academic Awards and Honors**

### **Overview**

In addition to conferring MPAS degree diplomas, HSC and PAS Program are proud to recognize student excellence during the PAS graduation banquet and at graduation. Students who have been on academic probation or committed a violation of the Student Code of Conduct & Civility (“The Code”) are not eligible for PAS honors and awards.

#### Clinical Phase Honors SCPES

More information on Honors SCPES can be found in the Files section of the Canvas Announcements Page. This page also provides a Mediasite video outlining an overview of the clinical year.

#### Dean’s List

The Dean’s List is established to recognize academic excellence when the student achieves a semester grade point average of 3.51 or greater for a semester in the didactic phase of the curriculum. (Dean’s List recognition is not awarded in the clinical phase of the curriculum).

#### Graduation Honors

Students may be awarded “Honors” upon graduation if their overall grade point average is greater than 3.51 on a 4.0 scale. No more than 20% of a single PA graduating class will be awarded “Honors” at graduation.

#### Special Awards at Graduation

Other special awards may be utilized by the PAS program to recognize exceptional academic, clinical, and leadership performance by a student. Special awards are not annotated on the student’s official transcript.

#### Pi Alpha Honor Society

HSC PAS program has a chapter of the Pi Alpha Honor Society. The Pi Alpha Honor Society is sponsored by the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) and promotes and recognizes significant academic achievement, leadership, research, community/professional service, and the encouragement of a high standard of character and conduct among physician assistants (PA) students and graduates. In order to be inducted into the Pi Alpha Honor Society students must have a minimum GPA of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale and demonstrate excellence in research, publishing, community/professional service, or leadership activities. Only 15% of the graduating class can be inducted into the Pi Alpha Honor Society. Inductees are chosen by the faculty and receive a letter, certificate of membership, pin, and Pi Alpha Honor Society cords,

which may be worn with their academic regalia.

## **HSC Campus Safety Information**

### **Emergency Preparedness**

Incidents of crime and other serious emergencies which occur on campus requiring immediate assistance should be reported to the **HSC Campus Police 817-735-2600** when on campus. Off-campus emergencies should be reported and called in to 911. Reports can be made on a confidential basis. Off-campus emergencies should be reported according to community standards with use of 911 as appropriate.

### **Emergency Plan for Building**

In the event of an emergency, students are advised to exit the building using the stairwells. Students should exit to the parking lot and move past the first two rows of parking to await further instruction. PA Studies Safety Liaison and can be reached at 817-735-2301.

### **UNTHSC Trust Line**

The Trust Line has been established to help students navigate any questions or concerns they may have in a way that is impartial and puts students first. When students reach out to this safe and risk-free reporting line, they can expect to receive clear and confidential guidance regarding any inquiry. The HSC Trust Line is administered through a third-party, independent company, Convercent. This ensures students' confidentiality when asking questions or reporting any potential ethical, legal, and/or business conduct violations or concerns. More Trust Line information is [linked here](#). The online Trust Line reporting form is [linked here](#).

### **Inclement Weather Advisory**

Campus facilities will close, and operations will be suspended when adverse weather conditions and/or safety hazards exist on the HSC property as the result of such weather. Students will be notified of any campus warnings or closures via email. For more information, see Policy 04.107 at <https://app.HSC.edu/policies/Home/AllPolicies>. For more information on evacuation plans, see [UNTHSC Evac/Shelter Plans](#).

### **Fire Drills**

Fire drills are conducted on a scheduled basis for all buildings in which patient care is performed. Students on rotation in clinics should become familiar with clinic-specific fire plans and be prepared to perform assigned tasks, if any, during drills or should a real fire occur. For more information, see <https://www.HSC.edu/safety/emergency-management/fire>

## **Stop the Bleed Campaign**

The American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma is leading the effort to save lives by teaching the civilian population to provide vital initial response to stop uncontrolled bleeding in emergency situations. This was accomplished by the development of a comprehensive and sustainable bleeding control education and information program targeted to civilians that will inform, educate and empower the 300+million citizens of the United States. The University of North Texas Health Science Center has adopted the *Stop the Bleed* course as its platform to train all students and university employees to immediately assist victims of active shooter and other intentional mass casualty events at the point of wounding. Students of the Master of Physician Assistant Studies will be individually trained on the use of the medical equipment in the medical kits prepositioned throughout the campus. More information on the Stop the Bleed Campaign can be found at the following link: [www.bleedingcontrol.org](http://www.bleedingcontrol.org)

## **Hazardous Exposures**

### **Prevention of Hazardous Exposures**

Students are educated throughout the curriculum on methods of prevention for hazardous exposures in healthcare such as use of universal precautions and sharps safety. Students have completed course content and obtained certificates in the following areas to prevent exposures: PPE, Fit Testing for N95 Masks, Blood Borne Pathogens, Infection Control Sharps Safety, Sterile Technique, Proper Scrub Procedures.

In addition, students have attested to the health and technical standards which outlines environmental exposures. The Health and Technical standards state the following:

*Candidates should be able to function in educational and healthcare settings with potential exposure to chemicals, gases, biohazards and environmental allergens that may be normally present in those settings. In those settings that require exposure to biohazards and/or chemicals, OSHA exposure limits and standards must be followed, including ability to use appropriate PPE.*

### **Methods of Prevention**

## Injuries

- Wear appropriate attire: closed-toe shoes, non-slip footwear, clothing that fits appropriately (not too loose or tight), eye-wear that does not slip/fall from face.
- Notify appropriate personnel for spills or debris on walkways.
- Perform lifts and patient transfers only if specifically trained to do so.

## Universal Precautions

- Cover any open wounds/lesions.
- Always use barrier protection.
- Use gloves for protection when working with or around blood and body fluids.
- Change glove between patients.
- Use glasses, goggles, masks, shields, and waterproof gowns/aprons to protect face from splashes.
- Wash hands if contaminated and after removing gloves.
- Use resuscitation equipment and devices for mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.
- Minimize spills and splatters; use leak-proof containers.
- Decontaminate all surfaces and devices after use.
- Promptly seek medical attention and counseling if exposed to contaminated materials.

## Sharps Safety

- Plan safe handling and disposal before any procedure.
- Use safe and effective needle alternatives when available.
- Choose safe sharps that are engineered with injury protection (i.e. retractable needles, blunt suture needles, safety scalpels, needleless blood transfer equipment).
- Always activate the device's safety features.
- Do not recap, shear, or break contaminated needles.
- Wear goggles/face shield and double gloves when using sharps.

- Do not pass used needles between workers.
- Do not leave sharps out where they may injure others.
- Immediately dispose of contaminated needles in in properly secured, puncture-resistant, closable, leak-proof, labeled sharps containers.
- Never place your hand in a sharp's container.

### **Hazardous Exposures**

In the event of a hazardous exposure (needle stick injury, body fluid splash, etc.), students are advised to seek immediate medical treatment. Students should follow the steps below and report the incident so that prophylactic measures can be instituted. Students should not delay treatment until after completing a class, shift, or a surgery. Proper management and reporting should begin immediately. It is critical to receive treatment within the first two hours after injury. More info linked here: [Occupational Safety Webpage](#)

Students should follow the guidelines below:

#### **On Campus Exposure**

- 1) Wash the area with soap and water or flush with large amounts of water for the eyes and mouth.
- 2) Notify course director.
- 3) Keep the source of blood at the site so blood can be drawn.
- 4) Contact and seek care at the Student Health or Priority Care Clinic
- 5) Three (3) red top vials of blood should be collected from the source.

#### **Off Campus Exposure**

- 1) Wash the area with soap and water and flush with large amounts of water for the eyes and mouth.
- 2) Notify supervisor or course director immediately.
- 3) Keep source of blood at the site so blood can be drawn.
- 4) Contact and seek care at the closest source of care-Student Health, Harris Occupational Health or nearest ER.
- 5) Three (3) red top vials of blood should be collected from the source.



When the injury occurs outside of the Tarrant County area, students should ALWAYS follow the clinical or hospital site infectious disease procedures and later report to Student Health or Harris Occupational Health Clinic.

### **Incident Report**

An incident report should be completed. Students in the didactic phase of education should request an incident report from their course director and submit to the HSC Director of Safety and their course director. The HSC Director of Safety can be reached at 817-735-2697.

### **Billing**

If the student is unable to go to Student Health or Harris Occupational Health Clinic, the student should submit their own insurance. The institution takes financial responsibility for all hazardous exposures. Bills and claims associated with blood borne pathogen exposures should be sent to [Health@unthsc.edu](mailto:Health@unthsc.edu) for reimbursement and payment.

More info linked here: [Occupational Safety Webpage](#)

### **Locations of Treatment**

#### **During Business Hours:**

Priority Care Clinic  
IREB First floor  
3430 Camp Bowie Blvd.  
Fort Worth, TX 76107  
Phone: 817-735-2273

#### **After Hours:**

Any Concentra  
2500 W Frwy (I-30), Suite 100  
Fort Worth, TX 76102  
817-882-8700

## **HSC Student Health**

### **Student Healthcare and Insurance**

All students are required to have health insurance to comply with HSC Policy. A school-sponsored Student Injury and Sickness Insurance Plan is provided through United Healthcare Student Resources: [www.uhcsr.com](http://www.uhcsr.com) or 1-866-429-4868. Information on specific policies is available in the Office of Student Affairs: 817-735-2341. The student is responsible for (1) the choice of the specific insurance policy; (2) payment of all healthcare costs, including the premium, as determined by the specific health insurance plan chosen; and (3) following the rules, regulations, and guidelines of their chosen plan. Student healthcare is available to all students at the HSC Student Health Clinic located at 855 Montgomery Street. The CVS Minute clinic adjacent to campus also accepts the student health insurance. All students, regardless of their health plan coverage, may access nursing advice and health information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by dialing 1-877-440-0549.

Faculty, staff, and all PA program employees do not have access to student medical records and cannot give medical advice or care to students or act as their healthcare provider (except in a medical emergency).

### **Immunizations and Health Screening Requirements**

All students are required to have vaccinations consistent with current CDC recommended vaccines for health professionals, state of Texas recommendations, and HSC policies. HSC requires all students to comply with immunization and health screening requirements to protect the campus community and patients, from illness and disease. Immunizations are submitted to and maintained by the Certiphi™ database. See Clinical Handbook for more information.

### **Office of Care and Civility**

#### **Student Assistance Program (SAP)**

Students at The University of North Texas Health Science Center have FREE, 24/7 access to virtual care services with TimelyCare. Students do not need insurance to access TimelyCare services. Download the app here (Apple/Google Play). As part of HSC's partnership with TimelyCare, students have access to:

TalkNow – 24/7, on-demand emotional support, scheduled Counseling – Select the day, time and mental health provider of your choice. (nine visits per academic year)

Psychiatry – Advanced mental health care, available upon referral from TimelyCare counselors or HSC Student Health. (Note – the Student Health Clinic also will continue to provide psychiatry services.)

Self-Care Content – 24/7 access to self-care tools and resources, such as meditation and yoga sessions, helpful videos and short articles from experts.

The National Suicide Hotline is also available to students who feel they are in a crisis, whether they are thinking about suicide, 24 hours a day, 7-days a week at 1-800-273-TALK (8255). For more information, see <https://www.HSC.edu/wellness-services/resources/for-students/>.

### **Substance Abuse and Self-Reporting**

HSC strongly encourages student with substance abuse problems to seek treatment before critical incidents (e.g., arrests, usage on campus property, or intoxication in the classroom or during clinical assignments) occur. For more information, see: <https://www.HSC.edu/wellness-services/resources/for-students/>

### **Zero Tolerance for Sexual Violence and Harassment**

It is the policy of HSC to maintain a workplace and a learning environment free of sexual harassment and intimidation. Harassment of students is a violation of Section 106.31 of Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972. Harassment of employees is a violation of Section 703 of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Texas Commission on Human Rights Act. Sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment. Any sexual harassment incidents should be reported immediately to the Office of Student Affairs or the Equal Employment and Opportunity Office.

## **HSC Student Services**

### **Student Affairs**

Student Affairs oversees issues that are relevant to all students from pre-enrollment through graduation. Student Affairs provides co-curricular and extra-curricular services, programs, and activities to facilitate students' academic training, personal growth, and professional development. For more information, see <https://www.HSC.edu/students/student-affairs/>.

### **Gibson D. Lewis Library**

An active ID badge is required for entry into the library. For more information on the Lewis Library, go to [UNTHSC LIBRARY](#)

### **Founders' Activity Center (FAC)**

The FAC is an on-campus fitness center that houses a variety of equipment and offers a wide range of group fitness classes. For more information, [click this link](#), call 817-735-2209, or email [recreation@UNTHSC.edu](mailto:recreation@UNTHSC.edu).

### **Printing, Scanning, and Copying**

The PAS Program does not provide printing, scanning, or copying services for students. Go to <http://library.hsc.unt.edu/content/printing-copying-and-scanning> to find a current listing of all locations and equipment students may use on campus. Information on Pharos, the print management system used at HSC, is also located at this link. For questions, students may contact the Library Service Desk at 817-735-2465 or by email at [askalibrarian@UNTHSC.edu](mailto:askalibrarian@UNTHSC.edu).

### **Use of HSC Logo**

To obtain the logo, approval of use, or with questions on brand use, students may contact the Office of Marketing and Communications 817-735-5149. The HSC Marketing and Identity Guide can be found at <https://www.HSC.edu/outreach/marketing-and-communications-2/graphics-and-branding/>.

Per the UNTHSC Office of Marketing and Communication guidelines, all student organization T-shirt or other designs must be approved by the faculty director of the organization and the UNTHSC Office of Marketing and Communication.

## **Student Veterans Information**

Veteran and military-specific resources and opportunities are available at HSC. More information about opportunities to learn about these resources is provided prior to new student orientation or at <https://www.HSC.edu/students/registrar/veterans-benefits/>.

## **Transportation**

HSC offers discounts to its employees and students for bus and train fares, as well as on the Bike Share program, to its employees and students. Further information can be found at <https://www.HSC.edu/operations/sustainability/transportation/>.

## **Parking**

To park a vehicle on campus, students must obtain a parking permit. These permits must be renewed annually on September 1<sup>st</sup>. For more information, go to <https://www.HSC.edu/police/parking-office/visitor-information/parking-permits/>.

## **Lost and Found**

HSC has central lost and found locations in the HSC Police Department and the Lewis Library. If any lost items of PAS students are found by PAS students, those can be brought to the PAS office suite.

## **Lockers**

During the didactic phase of the curriculum, the PAS program assigns each PAS student a locker. Once promoted to the clinical phase of the curriculum, that locker must be cleared out. For on-campus days during the clinical phase (PASS days), there are a limited number of day-use lockers available outside of the PAS program offices. These lockers are distributed on a first-come first-serve and must be emptied at the end of PASS day. Students also have the option of obtaining a locker through Student Affairs; however, this locker could be anywhere on campus. If students need the lock cut off because of a lost key or forgotten combination, he/she may email [PAStudies@UNTHSC.edu](mailto:PAStudies@UNTHSC.edu). The PAS program accepts no liability for contents within lockers.

## **Campus Map**

The layout of campus and most of these services can be located on the campus map found at <https://www.HSC.edu/campusmap/>

## Student Complaints

**COLLEGE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS ANONYMOUS COMPLAINT FORM.** You can click on [this link](#) to file an anonymous complaint online.



**Procedure Manual**  
of  
**UNTHSC at Fort Worth**  
**Physician Assistant Studies Program**

Effective Date: April 01, 2020

Revision Date(s): February 01, 2022

Reviewed Date(s): July 01, 2022

**ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY**

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**RESPONSIBLE UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT/DIVISION**

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Dean and Professor

College of Health Professions

University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth

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This manual contains the key procedures for **Physician Assistant Studies Program**.

This procedure manual is provided to maintain equitable and efficient operations and to reflect best practices. The goal of this manual is to have one document to reference procedures in relation to HSC policies. This manual will be updated on a regular basis.



## Procedure No. 1: Physician Assistant Deceleration Procedure

### **Procedure Statement**

The Physician Assistant Studies Program does not allow for deceleration of students from one cohort to another.

### **Reason for Procedure**

The purpose of this procedure is to state the Physician Assistant Studies Program's stance on deceleration of students within the program.

### **Area of Responsibility**

The University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth Physician Assistant Studies Program

### **Procedure Details**

The Physician Assistant Studies Program does not allow for deceleration of students within the PA Program.

### **Related Policies and References**

Physician Assistant Promotions, Probation, and Dismissal Procedure Manual

Physician Assistant Remediation Procedure

### **Definitions**

Deceleration: "Deceleration" is defined as the loss of a student from the entering cohort, who remains matriculated in the Physician Assistant Studies Program.

### **Online Forms**

None

## **Procedure No. 2: Physician Assistant Course Remediation**

### **Procedure Statement**

Students enrolled in the Physician Assistant Studies (PAS) Program must meet the academic and professional standards established by the PAS Program to progress through the didactic and clinical phases of the program. Physician Assistant Studies (PAS) students who fail a course in the didactic or clinic phase of training must both successfully remediate the failed course and remain otherwise eligible to continue in the PAS Program.

Any PAS student who successfully remediates a failed course in the didactic phase will be placed on Academic Probation. Any PAS student who unsuccessfully remediates a failed course is subject to dismissal. Students enrolled in the PAS Program are allowed one remediation attempt during the didactic phase and one remediation attempt during the clinical phase.

### **Reason for Procedure**

The purpose of this procedure is to provide guidelines for remediation after course failure for all students enrolled in the PAS Program.

### **Area of Responsibility**

<b>Responsible party</b>	<b>Procedure detail section</b>
PAS Student	1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9
Course Director	2b, 3, 6
Physician Assistant Student Performance Committee (PASPC)	2a, 3, 5, 6
Director of Academic Education (DAE)	2, 3
Director of Clinical Education (DCE)	2, 3
Registrar	6, 10

## Procedure Details

1. Any PAS student who receives a failing grade for a course and does not meet other criteria for dismissal must remedy the failing grade to passing or be subject to dismissal from the PAS Program.
  - a. A PAS student may fail a didactic or clinical course for reasons including, but not limited to, failed academic progress, professionalism violation, or poor course attendance as defined in the syllabus and/or the UNTHSC Student Code of Conduct and Civility.
  - b. Failing grades on assessments, OSCEs, and other evaluations within a course may be remediated under the direction of the Course Director.
2. The Course Director will establish a remediation plan and timeline with guidance from the PASPC, DAE or DCE.
  - a. The PASPC will assist the Course Director in the identification of resources to improve student academic and/or professional performance. The PASPC will also monitor student progress during the remediation process.
  - b. A remediation plan may include, but is not limited to:
    - i. Reading assignments
    - ii. Written completion of instructional objectives developed to target deficiencies identified during review of failed exam
    - iii. Written response to selected exam items with reference citations
    - iv. Written self-reflection exercises
    - v. Individual faculty-led tutoring (especially skills-related deficiencies)
    - vi. Additional clinical practice experience, which may require repeating an entire rotation
    - vii. Simulation training or work with Standardized patients
    - viii. Assignment of additional practice questions from an outside source (i.e. ExamMaster™)
3. The remediation of a failing course grade will be assessed by a method equivalent to course assessments failed by the student (i.e. administration of a comprehensive equivalency examination, OSCE, repeating a clinical practicum, etc.).
4. A PAS student can only remediate one course failure during the didactic phase and one course failure during the clinical phase.
5. Potential violations of the UNTHSC Student Code of Conduct and Civility (“The Code”) will be referred to the Student Affairs Office. If found to be in violation, a PAS student may receive a failing grade that is subject to remediation.
6. A PAS student who is required to remediate a failed didactic course will be placed on Academic Probation.
7. Successful course remediation will result in a grade of “C” in a graded course and “Pass” in a Pass/No Pass course.
8. A PAS student who does not successfully remediate a failed didactic or clinical practicum will be subject to dismissal.
9. A PAS student who does not complete a remediation plan by the assigned due date will be subject to dismissal.

10. The PAS student’s official transcript will reflect the outcome of remediation, to include the failing grade, the passing grade due to remediation, and the Academic Probation status. Only the remediated grade will be reflected in the GPA calculation.

### **Related Policies and References**

Physician Assistant Graduation Requirements

Physician Assistant Professionalism Violation Procedure

Physician Assistant Promotion, Probation, and Dismissal Procedure Manual

UNTHSC Student Code of Conduct and Civility (“The Code”)

### **Definitions**

1. Academic Probation. “Academic Probation” serves as notice to the student that their continued enrollment is in jeopardy.
2. Remediation. “Remediation” refers to activities designed to remedy a failed course grade due to an academic or professional violation.
3. Successful course remediation. “Successful remediation” means completion of all assigned remediation activities within the established timeline and achievement of a passing grade on reassessment. Successful remediation of a failed didactic or clinical course will result in a grade of “C” in a graded course and a “Pass” in a Pass/No Pass course.
4. Unsuccessful course remediation. “Unsuccessful remediation” means either failure to complete all assigned remediation activities within the established timeline or earning of a failing score on reassessment.

### **Online Forms**

UNTHSC PA Studies Remediation Agreement

### **History**

Revision Date(s): August 1, 2021: Definitions were changed to Successful *course* remediation and Unsuccessful *course* remediation. The UNTHSC PA Studies Remediation Agreement was added to the “Forms/Online Processes” section.

## Procedure No. 3: Physician Assistant Applicant Review, Interview, Selection

### Procedure Statement

The Physician Assistant Studies (PAS) Program employs a holistic three-step admissions process, aligning with The University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth (HSC) Notice of Non-Discrimination. This process aims to identify competitive applicants who fulfill admission criteria and exhibit the greatest potential for success within the program. The three essential steps are applicant review, applicant interview, and applicant selection. Only those who have actively participated in the entire admissions process are eligible for enrollment.

### Reason for Procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to specify the process by which students are admitted to the Physician Assistant Studies Program at The University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth.

### Area of Responsibility

Responsible party	Procedure detail section
Applicant	1, 2, 4
Office of Admissions and Recruitment	1, 2, 4
PAS Admissions Committee	2, 3
PAS Program Director	3,4
CHP Dean	3
PAS Admissions Committee Chair	4

### Procedure Details

The admissions process for the PAS Program involves three essential steps, ensuring a thorough evaluation of applicants.

1. **Applicant Review.** Based on guidelines provided by the PAS Department, the Office of Admissions and Recruitment (OAR) reviews each verified application received on or before the posted deadline for eligibility requirements. A verified application is a designation assigned by the Centralized Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA). Verified applications that meet all eligibility requirements are screened by the OAR for preferred criteria. Verified applications are advanced for file review for possible interview

selection based on meeting preferred criteria. The OAR validates each application for achievement of minimum admission requirements and eligibility for interview. All application materials, transcripts, letters of recommendation, and fees must be submitted on or before the posted deadline. Applications submitted after the posted deadline will not be considered.

2. **Applicant Interview.** Applicants are selected for an admissions interview based on a holistic review of the application. Interviews are structured using a Multiple Mini Interview (MMI) process. Applicants who fail to appear for a scheduled admission interview will be denied admission.
3. **Applicant Selection.** Applicants will be evaluated by the PAS-ADM Committee. The PAS-ADM Committee recommends acceptance or denial of admission to the PAS Program. Recommendations for admission will be based on the applicant's qualification as verified through the admissions process. Accepted applicants for admission may be admitted on a provisional basis, pending completion of remaining admissions verifications. No applicant will be admitted to the PAS Program on probationary basis. All admission decisions are subject to final approval by the PAS Program Director, College of Health Professions (CHP) Dean, or their designee.

Deferred Admission. Applicants accepted into the PAS Program may request one-year deferral of admission submitting a written petition (i.e., postal mail, faxed copy, or email with an attached copy) to the OAR. The written petition must indicate the rationale for the request and describe activities that are planned for the year. All petitions must be submitted prior to July 1 of the summer preceding the original matriculation date. Any petitions requesting deferral for longer than one year will not be considered. The OAR will forward requests for deferred admission to the PAS-ADM Committee Chair and PAS Program Director for review, which will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If deferred admission is granted by the PAS-ADM Committee Chair and PAS Program Director, the OAR will provide a written commitment to hold a place for the applicant in the next entering class. The applicant is not considered to be a Physician Assistant Student and is not eligible for school resources during deferment. If deferred admission is denied by the PAS-ADM Committee Chair and PAS Program Director, the OAR will provide a written notification to the accepted applicant, at which point the applicant may choose to either matriculate with the class in which they were accepted or deny the offer of admission to the program.

### **Related Policies and References**

Health Science Center Notice of Non-Discrimination  
Physician Assistant Advance Placement and Course Waivers  
Physician Assistant Deferred Matriculation  
Physician Assistant Prerequisite Admission Requirements

## Physician Assistant Transfer Of course Credit

### Definitions

1. CASPA. “CASPA” stands for Centralized Application Service for Physician Assistants. It is a full-service, web-based application system providing prospective students with the ability to apply to multiple participating PA programs with a single application and facilitating a streamlined admissions process for programs.
2. Applicant. “Applicant” means a person who has submitted a verified application for admission into the Physician Assistant Studies Program using approved processes and who has paid the required non-refundable application processing fees.
3. Deferred Matriculation. “Deferred Matriculation” means the matriculation of an applicant who has accepted an offer of admission and intends to enroll but has elected to change their original matriculation term to a future term.
4. Holistic. “Holistic” means a flexible individualized method of assessing an applicant’s capabilities by which balanced consideration is given to applicants’ experiences, attributes, and academic metrics. A holistic approach considers the “whole” applicant, rather than disproportionately focusing on any one factor.
5. MMI. “Multiple Mini Interview” is a type of interview designed to assess skills that cannot be measured by standardized exams or transcripts.

### Online Forms

Centralized Application Services for Physician Assistants (CASPA)

### History

Revision Date(s): 05/01/2024: The “three step” review process was created and deferred matriculation section was expanded on. Definitions “MMI” and “Holistic” were added.

## Procedure No. 4: Physician Assistant Student PA Awards

### Procedure Statement

The Physician Assistant Studies Program encourages student achievement through recognition of exceptional academic and professional performance.

## **Reason for Procedure**

The purpose of this procedure is to establish guidelines for PA Studies Awards which recognize outstanding achievement in the didactic and clinical phases of the program.

## **Area of Responsibility**

Physician Assistant Studies Program

## **Procedure Details**

1. **Dean's List:** Placement on the Dean's List occurs when a PA student achieves a semester grade point average of 3.51 or greater for a semester that is primarily didactic. Due to the varying experiences during clinical practica, Dean's List recognition is not awarded for clinical practica. A student who has been placed on academic or disciplinary probation for any reason during their enrollment is not eligible for Dean's List recognition.
2. **Graduation with Honors:** Students may be awarded "Honors" upon graduation if their overall grade point average is greater than or equivalent to 3.51 on a 4.0 scale. No graduate who has failed a course or rotation, or who has not been enrolled as a full-time student, or who has been placed on academic or disciplinary probation during their enrollment can receive a degree with honors. No more than 20% of a single graduating class will be awarded "Honors" at graduation.
3. **Outstanding Achievement in Physician Assistant Studies Awards:** These awards recognize exceptional academic and clinical performance based on participation in related activities and demonstrated commitment to learning and the PA profession. The Director of PA Studies makes the final determination of these award winners.
4. **Pi Alpha:** Pi Alpha is the national Physician Assistant honor society organized for the promotion and recognition of both PA students and graduates. Membership signifies the inductees' significant academic achievement and honors them for their leadership, research, community/professional service and other related activities. Student membership requires a minimum GPA of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale and demonstrated excellence in research, publishing, community/professional service, or leadership activities.

## **Related Policies and References**



None

**Definitions**

**See procedure details section.**

**Online Forms**

The student is responsible for updating their personal information in the performance tracking software and applying for awards in the Spring of their graduation year in order to be eligible for award consideration.

**History**

Revision Date(s): 04/01/2020

## **Procedure No. 5: Physician Assistant Clinical Site Selection**

### **Procedure Statement**

The Physician Assistant Studies Program will strive to maintain high quality clinical sites. Prior to the activation of a clinical site, the Clinical Team will assess the site's abilities to meet the educational and training goals of the course and the number of students that can be assigned in each academic year. Clinical sites that do not meet the minimum educational requirements for PA students shall be removed from the approved list of clinical sites. The PA student is not required or encouraged to arrange, provide, or solicit their own clinical rotation sites.

### **Reason for Procedure**

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the process regarding selecting and maintaining high quality clinical sites in accordance with ARC-PA (Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant) guidelines for the students enrolled in the clinical phase of The University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth Physician Assistant Studies Program.

### **Area of Responsibility**

Clinical Team

### **Procedure Details**

1. The Clinical Site Coordinator is responsible for collecting and compiling information on clinical sites. Clinical rotation sites shall be evaluated for overall suitability based upon:
  - Location and type of clinical practice provided.
  - Demographics of the population served.
  - Formal education, training and experience of the physician supervisor/preceptor(s).
  - Preceptor commitment to goals and objectives of the rotation.
  - Preceptor's knowledge of the Physician Assistant role and profession.
  - Adequacy of physical facilities for teaching and study.
  - Preceptor willingness to participate in instruction and supervision of students.
  - Preceptor willingness to provide written/verbal evaluations of student's performance.

- Sufficiency of patients to provide adequate student experiences.
  - The presence of a practicing PA on site as a role model (not a requirement).
2. A record of approved clinical sites will be maintained and updated on an ongoing basis.
  3. PA student evaluations of preceptors and sites will be collected and reviewed annually.

### **Related Policies and References**

None

### **Definitions**

1. Director of Clinical Education (DCE). “Director of Clinical Education” is a faculty member who develops, maintains, oversees, and ensures adequacy and appropriateness of all clinical experiences to ensure they are in accordance with ARC-PA standards as well as program outcomes and goals.
2. Senior Administrative Coordinator (SAC). “Senior Administrative Coordinator” is an employee who is a high-level administrator that provides support to the DCE and oversees student rotations.
3. Clinical Site Coordinator (CSC). “Clinical Site Coordinator” is an employee who is responsible for recruiting, scheduling and maintaining clinical education sites.
4. Clinical Site. “Clinical site” is any place where PA Student clinical education occurs that is outside the normal classroom or simulation lab environment.
5. Clinical Team. “Clinical Team” is the departmental team comprised of the DCE, CSC, and SAC.

### **Online Forms**

Performance Tracking Software

### **History**

Revision Date(s): 04/01/2020

## **Procedure No. 6: Physician Assistant Student Employment**

### **Procedure Statement**

Students enrolled in the Physician Assistant Studies Program are discouraged from obtaining or maintaining employment while enrolled. Physician Assistant students are expected to give attendance to classes and to clinical practicum assignments priority over employment. Physician Assistant students may not be employed to perform medical or patient care related services at any private or public medical practice, clinic, or institution, during any time in which they are under the sponsorship of the Physician Assistant Studies Program and assigned to that practice, clinic, or institution as a student. If by chance a student is employed at a particular clinic or health care institution for any reason, that student may not be placed at that clinic or institution for any of their clinical practica. Students are not required to work for the PA program.

### **Reason for Procedure**

The purpose of this procedure is to establish guidelines regarding students that are employed during their enrollment in The University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth Physician Assistant Studies Program.

### **Area of Responsibility**

Physician Assistant Studies Program

### **Procedure Details**

1. Students will not be afforded special consideration due to employment when making clinical practicum assignments.
2. Students who fail to meet the expectations during the didactic or clinical practicum phases of the educational program, due to employment conflicts could lead to dismissal from the program.
3. Students must not substitute for or function as instructional faculty or clinical staff or administrative staff while they are a student in any phase of the PA Program.

### **Related Policies and References**

Physician Assistant Promotions, Probation, Dismissal Procedure Manual  
Physician Assistant Student Involvement in Patient Care Related Activities

**Definitions**

None

**Online Forms**

None

**History**

Revision Date(s): 04/01/2020

## **Procedure No. 7: Physician Assistant Prerequisite Admission Requirements**

### **Procedure Statement**

All enrolled students must have participated in the competitive admissions process. All completed coursework will be considered in the admissions process. Prerequisite requirements cannot be waived. Exceptions are not permitted. Prerequisite coursework and degree requirements must be completed at colleges and universities located within and accredited by regional accrediting agencies in the United States. The minimum amount of semester credit hours may not be waived. All prerequisite courses must have been completed with a grade of “C” (2.0 on 4.0 scale), “Pass” or higher. Prerequisite science courses must be designed for science majors. Prerequisite courses cannot be used simultaneously to meet more than one prerequisite.

### **Reason for Procedure**

The purpose of this procedure is to define the prerequisite requirements for applicants seeking admission to the Physician Assistant Studies (PAS) Program at The University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth (HSC).

### **Area of Responsibility**

<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Procedure Detail section</b>
PAS Admissions Committee	1, 3
Applicant	1,2,3
Office of Admissions and Recruitment	3,4

### **Procedure Details**

1. Applicants seeking admission to the PAS Program can find detailed information about the prerequisite coursework and degree requirements on the PAS Program’s Admissions Information webpage.
2. Prerequisites must be completed at a regionally accredited college or university in the United States. Foreign coursework is not accepted.
3. The Office of Admissions and Recruitment (OAR) cannot provide transcript evaluations. Applicants are responsible for confirming that prerequisite requirements have been satisfied.
4. Applicants with questions about whether a particular course satisfies one of the prerequisite coursework requirements should submit a request for consideration of the coursework as a prerequisite substitution to the OAR. Prerequisite coursework substitution

requests for courses that do not carry the same name or that were delivered by an atypical academic department are forwarded to the Physician Assistant Studies Admissions (PAS-ADM) Committee for review. Coursework substitutions are considered on a case-by-case basis. The PAS-ADM Committee reserves the right to approve or deny any prerequisite course work substitution requests.

### **Related Policies/Procedures and References**

Physician Assistant Applicant Review, Interview, and Selection

Physician Assistant Transfer Of Course Credit

Physician Assistant Advance Placement and Course Waivers

### **Definitions**

none

### **Online Forms**

All admission requirement updates are posted on The University of North Texas Science Center at Fort Worth Physician Assistant Studies Program Admission Information webpage.

### **History**

Revision Date(s): 05/01/2024

## **Procedure No. 8: Physician Assistant Involvement in Patient Care Activities**

### **Procedure Statement**

Physician Assistant students may not be given responsibility for patient care that exceeds their capabilities as a student, or that violates other legal restrictions. Students may not take the responsibility or place of qualified staff. Involvement in patient care is permitted only when authorized by the preceptor or faculty member. Assigned patient care activities should not exceed the student's stage of learning or clinical knowledge. Under no circumstances should assigned patient care related activities exceed those which a graduate physician assistant would otherwise be directed to perform. While the Physician Assistant Studies Program will consider personal and cultural values, ethics and religious beliefs of the students, patient health and the mission of the institution will not be impacted as a result of such beliefs.

### **Reason for Procedure**

The purpose of the procedure is to establish guidelines regarding student participation in patient care activities while in enrolled in The University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth Physician Assistant Studies Program.

### **Area of Responsibility**

<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Procedure Detail section</b>
Students	1, 4, 5-7
Faculty	2, 3, 6

### **Procedure Details**

1. Students must be able to demonstrate the ability to meet the health and technical standards.
2. Student preceptors may not permit PA students to perform any medical service or function without appropriate supervision. Supervision in the clinical setting is defined as the preceptor being physically present or immediately available to provide guidance.
3. After demonstrating proficiency, students may be permitted to undertake additional defined patient care activities under the appropriate supervision and direction of their assigned preceptor.



4. PA students are required to complete HIPAA training prior to any patient contact activities. Students may not release confidential patient information to anyone outside of their clinical preceptor or a qualified faculty member.
5. Students must follow the protocol for “patient notification of student status” and “dress code” as outlined in the SCPE Student Handbook regarding badge and white lab coat wear during clinical rotations. They must take all reasonable steps to disclose their status as a “physician assistant student” while performing patient care related activities.
6. Treatment and care will be provided to persons in need in accordance with the HSC Non-discrimination Policy.
7. Under some circumstances concerning environmental, chemical, and hazardous exposures, the PA student may be asked to make an informed decision concerning their continued participation in that SCPE and the resulting ramifications to their program completion.

### **Related Policies and References**

UNTHSC Electronic Protected Health Information HIPAA Compliance Policy  
Physician Assistant Student Employment  
Physician Assistant Student Service Work  
Physician Assistant Health and Technical Standards

### **Definitions**

1. Patient care related activities. “Patient care related activities” means permitted activities to include direct patient care and access to patient care related information under the supervision and direction of a qualified preceptor or faculty member. Under no circumstances is the student permitted to write patient care orders independently.
2. SCPE. “SCPE” means Supervised Clinical Practice Experience.

### **Online Forms**

SCPE Student Handbook

## History

Revision Date(s): 04/01/2020

## **Procedure No. 9: Physician Assistant Transfer Of Course Credit**

### **Procedure Statement**

The Physician Assistant Studies Program (PAS) does not admit transfer students or accept transfer of course credit from other PAS programs.

### **Reason for Procedure**

The purpose of this procedure is to establish guidelines for admitting transfer students or accepting transfer of course credit(s) from other PA programs.

### **Area of Responsibility**

The University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth PAS Program.

### **Procedure Details**

The Physician Assistant Studies Program does not admit transfer students or accept transfer of course credit from other PA programs.

### **Related Policies/Procedures and References**

Physician Assistant Advance Placement and Course Waivers  
Physician Assistant Applicant Review, Interview, and Selection  
Physician Assistant Prerequisite Admission Requirements

### **Definitions**

None

### **Online Forms**

None  
**History**

Revision Date(s): 05/01/2024

## Procedure No. 10: Physician Assistant Student Service Work

### Procedure Statement

Physician Assistant students may not be given responsibility for patient care that exceeds their capabilities as a student, or that violates other legal restrictions. Students may not take the responsibility or place of qualified staff. Involvement in patient care is permitted only when authorized by the preceptor or faculty member. Assigned patient care activities should not exceed the student's stage of learning or clinical knowledge. Under no circumstances should assigned patient care related activities exceed those which a graduate physician assistant would otherwise be directed to perform. While the Physician Assistant Studies Program will consider personal and cultural values, ethics and religious beliefs of the students, patient health and the mission of the institution will not be impacted because of such beliefs.

### Reason for Procedure

The purpose of the procedure is to establish guidelines regarding student participation in patient care activities while in enrolled in The University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth Physician Assistant Studies Program.

### Area of Responsibility

Responsible Party	Procedure Detail section
Students	1, 4, 5-7
Faculty	2, 3, 6

### Procedure Details

4. Students must be able to demonstrate the ability to meet the health and technical standards.
5. Student preceptors may not permit PA students to perform any medical service or function without appropriate supervision. Supervision in the clinical setting is defined as the preceptor being physically present or immediately available to provide guidance.
6. After demonstrating proficiency, students may be permitted to undertake additional defined patient care activities under the appropriate supervision and direction of their assigned preceptor.

8. PA students are required to complete HIPAA training prior to any patient contact activities. Students may not release confidential patient information to anyone outside of their clinical preceptor or a qualified faculty member.
9. Students must follow the protocol for “patient notification of student status” and “dress code” as outlined in the SCPE Student Handbook regarding badge and white lab coat wear during clinical rotations. They must take all reasonable steps to disclose their status as a “physician assistant student” while performing patient care related activities.
10. Treatment and care will be provided to persons in need in accordance with the HSC Non-discrimination Policy.
11. Under some circumstances concerning environmental and chemical exposures, the PA student may be asked to make an informed decision concerning their continued participation in that SCPE and the resulting ramifications to their program completion.

### **Related Policies and References**

UNTHSC Electronic Protected Health Information HIPAA Compliance Policy  
Physician Assistant Student Employment  
Physician Assistant Student Service Work  
Physician Assistant Health and Technical Standards

### **Definitions**

3. Patient care related activities. “Patient care related activities” means permitted activities to include direct patient care and access to patient care related information under the supervision and direction of a qualified preceptor or faculty member. Under no circumstances is the student permitted to write patient care orders independently.
4. SCPE. “SCPE” means Supervised Clinical Practice Experience.

### **Online Forms**

SCPE Student Handbook

## History

Revision Date(s): 04/01/2020

## Procedure No. 11: Physician Assistant Health and Technical Standards

### Procedure Statement

The Physician Assistant Studies (PAS) Program provides specific health and technical standards that all enrolled students must meet and maintain to actively participate in the educational components of the curriculum. Applicants pursuing a physician assistant degree must have abilities and skills in six areas: Observation, Communication, Motor, Intellectual, Behavioral and Environmental. While technological accommodations can address some disabilities in certain areas, applicants should perform in a reasonably independent manner. The use of a trained intermediary, which relies on someone else's power of selection and observation, is not a permissible accommodation.

1. Observation: Observation requires the functional use of vision and somatic sensations. The applicant must be able to observe demonstrations and experience lessons in the basic sciences including, but not limited to, physiological and pharmacological demonstrations, microbiologic cultures, and microscopic studies of tissues in normal and pathologic states. An applicant must be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance and close at hand. Observation is enhanced by functional use of the sense of smell.
2. Communication: An applicant must exhibit interpersonal skills to enable effective caregiving of patients, including the ability to communicate effectively in person and in writing with all members of a multidisciplinary health care team, patients, and those supporting patients. This communication allows for information gathering and observation of changes in mood, activity, posture, and perceived nonverbal communication.
3. Motor: Applicants should have sufficient motor function to elicit information by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic and therapeutic maneuvers and procedures. An applicant should be able to execute movements which are reasonably required to provide general care and emergency treatment to patients. Motor function requires coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and tactile and visual assessment.
4. Intellectual: Applicants should possess conceptual, integrative, and quantitative abilities. These include obtaining measurements and performing calculations, reasoning, analysis, and synthesis. Problem-solving, the critical skill demanded of physician assistants, requires all these intellectual abilities. In addition, applicants should be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand spatial relationships of structure.



5. Behavioral: Applicants should be able to demonstrate full use of their intellectual capacity, sound judgment, and capability to care for patients in a mature, sensitive, and effective manner. Applicants must be able to function effectively under stress. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent to the clinical care of patients. Compassion, integrity, interpersonal skills, interest, and motivation are all personal qualities that are considered during the admission and education process.
  
6. Environmental: Applicants should be able to function in educational and healthcare settings with potential exposure to chemicals, gases, biohazards, and environmental allergens that may be normally present in those settings. In those settings that require exposure to biohazards and/or chemicals, OSHA exposure limits and standards must be followed, including ability to use appropriate PPE.

**Reason for Procedure**

The purpose of this procedure is to establish the requirements regarding the health and technical standards for students’ enrollment in and progression through the Physician Assistant Studies Program at The University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth.

**Area of Responsibility**

<b>Responsible party</b>	<b>Procedure detail section</b>
Student	1, 2
Division of Student Affairs	3

**Procedure Details**

1. Students seeking enrollment into the PAS Program must sign a statement indicating they have read and understand the Health and Technical Standards requirements and are in compliance with them.

2. Students returning from a medical leave of absence are required to submit documentation, including a physician’s statement of compliance with the PAS Program Health and Technical Standards requirements.
3. Requests for accommodation under Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) rules are referred to the Division of Student Affairs for review and a recommendation.

### **Related Policies and References**

Americans with Disabilities Act Policy  
Physician Assistant Program Applicant Review, Interview, and Selection  
Physician Assistant Prerequisite Admission Requirements  
Physician Assistant Advance Placement and Course Waivers

### **Definitions**

1. ADA. “ADA” stands for Americans with Disabilities Act. It prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in several areas, including employment, transportation, public accommodations, communications, and access to state and local government programs and services.

### **Online Forms**

None

### **History**

**Revision Date(s): 02/25/2025**

## Procedure No. 12: Physician Assistant Advance Placement and Course Waivers

### **Procedure Statement**

The Physician Assistant Studies Program does not award advance placement and course waivers to students accepted into the PA program.

### **Reason for Procedure**

The purpose of this procedure is to establish guidelines regarding the awarding of advance placement and course waivers for students enrolled in the Physician Assistant Studies Program.

### **Area of Responsibility**

The PAS Program at The University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth.

### **Procedure Details**

The PAS Program does not award advance placement or course waivers to students accepted into the PAS Program.

### **Related Policies and References**

Physician Assistant Applicant Screening, Review, and Selection

Physician Assistant Prerequisite Admission Requirements

Physician Assistant Transfer of Course Credit

### **Definitions**

None

### **Online Forms**

None

### **History**

Revision Date(s): 05/01/2024: added related policies/references. The PAS Program does not award advance placement or course waivers to students accepted into the PAS Program.

## Procedure No. 13: Physician Assistant Leave of Absence

### Procedure Statement

Students enrolled in academic programs within the College of Health Professions are permitted to request leave of absence due to a medical condition or for personal reasons. Upon completion of the leave of absence, the student must request readmission to the academic program in writing. Leave of absence for personal reasons cannot be granted if the student is not in good standing at the time the request is made. Leave of absence requires approval of the Dean of the College of Health Professions. After consultation with the student and upon recommendation from the respective director of the academic program in which the student is seeking re-enrollment, the Dean will determine if readmission after completion of leave of absence is approved. Upon return from leave of absence, the returning student may be required to affirm continued compliance with health and technical standards of their respective academic program. Students returning from leave of absence may be required to complete additional coursework or testing to meet academic requirements of the respective program to which they are returning.

### Reason for Procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to establish guidelines regarding leave of absence requests for students enrolled in the College of Health Professions.

### Area of Responsibility

<b>Responsible party</b>	<b>Procedure detail section</b>
Student	1-6
Director, CHP	2, 5
Dean, CHP	5-8
Registrar	2, 6, 7

### Procedure Details

1. Leave of absence requests must be made in writing.

- a. If the leave is due to a medical condition, the request must be accompanied by documentation from a licensed healthcare professional. Documentation supporting leave for medical reasons must describe the nature of the medical need and the estimated length of time needed.
  - b. If leave is due to personal reasons, the student must be in good standing and the request must be accompanied by documentation from the student describing the reason and the estimated length of time needed for resolution. Leave of absence for personal reasons will not be granted if the sole purpose for taking the leave of absence is to avoid a failing grade or placement on Academic Probation.
2. A student taking leave of absence must submit a notification to the Office of Student Affairs indicating the date of withdrawal and the date the student expects to return, if approved by the respective academic program, to resume classes or clinical rotations.
3. Upon returning from leave of absence, regardless of the reason, the student must petition for readmission in writing. Depending on the reason, the returning student may be required to submit additional documentation supporting their ability to resume a full academic load in their respective program.
4. The returning student should not present a health hazard to themselves or others in healthcare or academic environments. Documentation may be required to confirm the student continues to meet the Health and Technical Standards of the academic program. Students returning from leave of absence may be required to reaffirm they meet immunization and health screening requirements.
5. Students returning from leave of absence may be required to complete additional coursework or testing to meet academic requirements of the respective program to which they are returning. The Dean should consult with the Program Director to confirm any additional requirements. To sustain congruity of learning in the program or to remediate learning deficiencies, the academic program may require a returning student to accomplish a revised academic schedule. A revised schedule may include, but will not be limited to, repeating courses, auditing courses, and/or completing new courses and/or assessments. The purpose of the revised schedule should be to prepare the student to resume progress in the program, to complete remaining courses or activities in the program, and/or to improve the student's chances for success in the program. A student may be required to repeat all or a portion of previously completed portions of the curriculum upon their return. The director of the respective academic program retains approval over any requirements that are part of an approved remediation plan or a revised academic schedule.

6. If readmission is approved, the student shall be reinstated under conditions that are contained in an approved readmission plan. Failure of the student to accept an approved readmission plan may result in the student's dismissal from the respective program.
7. A returning student is normally readmitted in good standing unless placement on Academic Probation is a condition for continued enrollment under an approved readmission plan. The returning student may be placed on Academic Probation if required for readmission by their respective program.
8. Leave of absence of greater than 1 year will not normally be approved.

### **Related Policies and References**

Americans with Disabilities Act

Behavior Intervention and Withdrawal

Student Code of Conduct and Civility ("The Code")

Physician Assistant Remediation

Physician Assistant Health and Technical Standards

Physician Assistant Graduation Requirements

Physician Assistant Promotions, Probation, and Dismissal Procedure Manual

### **Definitions**

1. Dismissal: "Dismissal" means the student is no longer eligible to attend courses in the academic program's curriculum. A Dismissed student is not eligible for graduation.
2. Good Standing: "Good standing" requires a cumulative GPA of  $\geq 3.0$  in the DPT program and is defined in the PA procedure 15.413 CHP – Physician Assistant Promotions, Probation, and Dismissal.
3. Readmission: "Readmission" means reinstatement into the academic program under specified terms and conditions that may include additional requirements for success.

### **Online Forms**

None

**History**

Revision Date(s): 04/01/2020

## **Procedure No. 14: Physician Assistant Grade Appeals**

### **Procedure Statement**

Students enrolled in the Physician Assistant Studies (PAS) Program are responsible for meeting the standards of academic performance established for each course in which they are enrolled as well as requirements for completion of their academic program. Faculty members are responsible for establishing standards of academic performance and for evaluating student performance in an equitable manner. Faculty decisions in such matters are considered authoritative and can be overturned only when it has been determined that a grade was assigned in a capricious, inequitable, arbitrary, or erroneous manner.

### **Reason for Procedure**

The purpose of this procedure is to provide guidelines for appealing grades for all students enrolled in the PAS Program.

### **Area of Responsibility**

<b>Responsible party</b>	<b>Procedure detail section</b>
PAS Student	1-5
Program Director	4
Course Director (CD)	1, 3
Dean, CHP	5
PASPC	
Student Affairs	--

### **Procedure Details**

1. Grades assigned by PAS Course Directors (CD) are final.
2. Grades are subject to appeal only when the student believes that the grade was awarded in an inequitable, arbitrary, or erroneous manner. Appropriate grounds for appeal include circumstances in which the grade was assigned based on:
  - a. inequitable treatment that is the result of departure from the instructor's stated standards and/or course policies; or
  - b. a decision based on an error in fact



3. If a PAS student believes that an incorrect grade was assigned, the student is expected to first submit an appeal in writing to the PAS CD.
  - a. All appeals must be made in writing within 5 business days of receipt of the original grade or decision.
4. If needed or desired, after receiving an appeal decision from the PAS CD, further appeal may be made to the PAS Program Director in writing within 5 business days of receipt of the PAS CD final decision.
5. If needed or desired, after receiving an appeal decision from the PAS Program Director, further appeal may be made to the CHP Dean in writing within 5 business days of receipt of the PAS Program Director's final decision. The decision made by the CHP Dean is considered final.

### **Related Policies and References**

UNTHSC Student Affairs Policy Manual, section on Academic and Non-Academic Grievances

### **Definitions**

None

### **Online Forms**

None

### **History**

Revision Date(s): None. Procedure created Nov 2021.

## Procedure No. 15: Physician Assistant Graduation Requirements

### Procedure Statement

Students who have met all course requirements and have been recommended for graduation may be awarded the Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) degree provided they meet all of the conditions listed below:

- A. Have satisfactorily completed all academic requirements of the Physician Assistant Studies Program
- B. Have complied with all legal and financial requirements of the University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth.
- C. Have exhibited the ethical, professional, behavioral, and personal characteristics necessary for practice as a PA.
- D. Have completed and returned to the Physician Assistant Studies Program or the Office of the Registrar all graduation forms and paperwork required by the Physician Assistant Studies Program and the institution.
- E. Have met other time limits listed below:
  - 1. The maximum time limit for completing all graduation requirements is seventy-two (72) months.
  - 2. Rarely, students may be required to meet additional requirements to meet other health science center, state, or national regulations.

### Reason for Procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to establish consistent requirements for students recommended for graduation from The University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth Physician Assistant Studies Program

### Area of Responsibility

Responsible party	Procedure detail section
College of Health Professions	1
Student	2
Dean, CHP	3

### Procedure Details

1. Graduation requirements are listed in the catalog at the time of the student's entry into the Physician Assistant Studies Program.
2. Students who have not fulfilled all graduation requirements by the day of graduation must request and receive permission to participate in commencement ceremonies from the Dean of the College of Health Professions.
3. Only in unusual circumstances and with approval of the Dean of the College of Health Professions will a degree be awarded in absentia.

### **Related Policies and References**

Physician Assistant Remediation

Physician Assistant Promotion, Probation, Dismissal Procedure Manual

Physician Assistant Leave of Absence

### **Definitions**

None

### **Online Forms**

None

### **History**

Revision Date(s): 07/01/2022 Removed item from procedure details that states: *Have completed six academic years of credit at an accredited college or university, of which, at least the last three were at the University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth.*

## Procedure No. 16: Physician Assistant Promotion, Probation, Dismissal Procedure

### Procedure Statement

Students enrolled in the Physician Assistant Studies Program must meet the academic and professional standards established by this Physician Assistant Studies Program procedure to progress through the program. Students who fail to meet these standards are subject to Academic Probation or dismissal. To be eligible for promotion, the student must meet the requirements of each course in all respective semesters of the curriculum.

**Didactic Phase:** Successful completion of the didactic phase of the Physician Assistant Studies Program curriculum is required to progress to the clinical phase. All students must complete the Physician Assistant Studies Program didactic phase with didactic course grades consisting of no more than 5 Cs and 0 Fs. A student who fails a didactic course can remediate that course for a grade of no higher than a C. Only one didactic course failure can be remediated. Students earning six or more course grades of C during the didactic phase with a program cumulative grade point average (cGPA) less than 3.25 are subject to program dismissal. Students earning six or more course grades of C with a cGPA  $\geq 3.25$  will continue in the program as long as they maintain a cGPA  $\geq 3.25$ . Upon earning a cGPA  $< 3.25$  in the didactic phase, students with six or more course grades of C will be dismissed.

**Clinical Phase:** All students must complete the Physician Assistant Studies Program clinical phase with clinical phase course grades consisting of no more than 1 C and 0 Fs. A student who fails a clinical course can remediate that course, but only one clinical course failure can be remediated. Earning two or more clinical phase course grades of C or failure of a clinical course remediation, regardless of cGPA, will result in dismissal. A student failing a second clinical course may not remediate the second failure and will be dismissed.

**Academic Probation:** Students will be placed on Academic Probation if they earn 3 or more course grades of C in the didactic phase. Students will be removed from Academic Probation upon completion of all didactic phase requirements.

**Academic Concern:** Students will be placed on Academic Concern for any of the following: 1) earning two C grades in the didactic phase, 2) earning one C or requiring a remediation of an F grade in the clinical phase, or 3) requiring a remediation of a professionalism violation. This academic status recognizes students who may require additional assistance to successfully complete didactic phase requirements. Academic Concern status will persist through didactic and clinical phases. Students will be removed from Academic Concern by the Student Performance Committee prior to graduation.

In addition to the Didactic Phase and Clinical Phase criteria above, a Physician Assistant Student is subject to dismissal from the Physician Assistant Studies Program regardless of grades earned and/or cGPA for unprofessional behavior or failure to comply with the Student Code of Conduct and Civility (“The Code”) and/or with UNTHSC policies.

A student’s appeal of a Physician Assistant Studies Program dismissal must be filed in writing to the Dean of the College of Health Professions within 5 business days of dismissal notification.

### **Reason for Procedure**

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the process surrounding promotion, probation and dismissal from the Physician Assistant Studies Program for students entering July 01, 2020 and thereafter.

### **Area of Responsibility**

<b>Responsible party</b>	<b>Procedure detail section</b>
Student	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9
Course Director	2
PASPC Chair	4, 5
Program Director	5
Director of Clinical Education	3
Dean, CHP	8
Student Affairs	9
PA Administration	9

### **Procedure Details**

1. Physician Assistant Students must accumulate acceptable course grades. Standards for completion of each course are contained in the course syllabus.

2. A Physician Assistant Student who fails a didactic course can remediate that course once. Successful remediation will result in a grade of “C” for that course, which will then count toward the number of Cs a student has accumulated. Only one didactic course can be remediated during the didactic phase.
3. A Physician Assistant Student who fails a practicum course in the clinical phase can remediate that course once. Successful remediation will result in a grade of “C” for that clinical course, which will then count toward the number of Cs a student has accumulated in the clinical phase. Only one practicum course can be remediated in the clinical phase.
4. A Physician Assistant Student with either course grades totaling 3 or more Cs in the didactic phase or successful remediation of a failed didactic course will be placed on Academic Probation. Students will be removed from Academic Probation upon completion of all didactic phase requirements with no more than 5 Cs and 0 Fs.
5. A Physician Assistant Student is subject to dismissal from the program for reasons including, but not limited to, the following: (1) accumulation of 6 or more Cs in courses taken in the didactic phase with a cGPA of < 3.25, (2) accumulation of 2 Cs in the clinical phase, (3) unsuccessful remediation of a failed didactic or clinical course regardless of cGPA, (4) failure of a second didactic course after the successful remediation of a didactic course regardless of cGPA, (5) failure of a second practicum course after the successful remediation of a prior practicum course regardless of cGPA, (6) documented critical, persistent, or multiple professionalism violation(s), or (7) failure to comply with the Student Code of Conduct and Civility (“The Code”) and/or with UNTHSC policies.
6. If a student has any issues (e.g., medical, personal) they believe may affect their academic performance in either the didactic or clinical phase, a student may do the following: (1) contact the Student Service Center for documentation of the issue(s) and assistance with resources, (2) demonstrate consistent use of appropriate resources to support academic performance in light of the issues, and (3) inform their Academic Advisor and the Associate Director of the PA Department that the student is working with Student Services. A student is not required to identify the nature of the circumstances beyond their discussion with the Student Service Center. Prior to poor academic performance, the three points in this paragraph must be documented for there to be consideration of such circumstances on academic performance issues.
7. A student dismissed from the PA program can make an appeal within 5 business days of official notification to the Dean of the College of Health Professions. A student can only appeal dismissal once for nonacademic issues and once for academic issues.

8. The Dean is expected to notify the student of a decision on an appeal within 5 business days. If the Dean determines that dismissal is not supported, the Dean will consult with the Program Director to develop a remediation plan. If the dismissal is upheld, the student will be dismissed.
9. Appeals are handled in accordance with UNTHSC Academic and Non-academic Complaint/Grievance Policy

### **Related Policies and References**

UNTHSC Student Affairs Policy Manual, section: UNTHSC Academic and Non-academic Complaint/Grievance Policy  
Physician Assistant Graduation Requirements

### **Definitions**

1. Academic Probation. "Academic Probation" serves as notice to the student that their continued enrollment is in jeopardy.
2. Academic Concern: "Academic Concern" serves as notice to the student that their continued enrollment is in jeopardy due to poor academic performance and does not alter academic standing.
3. Dismissal. "Dismissal" means disenrollment from the curriculum. A dismissed student is not eligible for graduation.
4. Satisfactory Standing. "Satisfactory standing" in the didactic and clinical portions of the program requires accumulation of acceptable course grades.
5. Remediation. "Remediation" refers to activities designed to remedy a failed course grade due to an academic or professional violation.

### **Online Forms**

None

## **History**

The definition “Academic Concern” was expanded upon.

July 2024: This procedure was a manual that contained 3 sections applying to different cohorts. The first 2 sections were removed, and “Manual” was removed from the procedure name.

Effective Date: August 01, 2021



## Procedure No. 17: Physician Assistant Deferred Matriculation

### Procedure Statement

The University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth (UNTHSC) Physician Assistant (PA) Studies Program has a general preference to avoid deferral of matriculation. However, some circumstances may warrant a request to defer admission to the subsequent year. Deferred admission requests are considered by the PA Studies Admissions Committee on a case-by-case basis.

### Reason for Procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to establish a procedure on deferred matriculation of accepted applicants to the UNTHSC PA Studies Program.

### Area of Responsibility

Responsible party	Procedure detail section
Applicant	1-2, 6
Office of Admission and Recruitment	3,5,7
PA Studies Admissions Committee	4
PA Studies Program Director	4

### Procedure Details

1. Accepted applicants who wish to request deferral must submit a written petition (i.e., postal mail, faxed copy, or email with an attached copy) to the Office of Admissions and Recruitment indicating the rationale for the request and describing activities that are planned for the year. Applicants should address their letter to the Office of Admissions and Recruitment, Division of Student and Academic Affairs, UNT Health Science Center, 3500 Camp Bowie Boulevard, Fort Worth, TX 76107. Petitions requesting deferral for longer than one (1) year will not be considered.
2. All requests for deferral must be submitted prior to July 1 of the summer preceding the original matriculation date.

3. The Office of Admissions and Recruitment will forward the letter to the PA Studies Admissions Committee for review.
4. The PA Studies Admissions committee will review and decide to either accept or reject the applicant's request for deferred matriculation. The recommended decision will be forwarded to the PA Studies Director for final approval.
5. If granted, the Office of Admissions and Recruitment will provide a written commitment to hold a place for the student in the next entering class.
  - a. Note: the applicant is not considered to be a physician assistant student and should not represent himself or herself as such for personal or professional gain (e.g., scholarships, scholarly, and/or clinical activity). Additionally, the applicant is not eligible for school resources, including malpractice insurance, student health or mental health services, financial aid, academic preparation, or curricula content.
6. The applicant is expected to provide a written commitment to attend as scheduled and to refrain from applying to other physician assistant programs. Receiving a deferred admission is not intended to be used to secure a spot in the UNTHSC Physician Assistant Studies Program while continuing applications with other programs in the subsequent year. In doing so, the deferred admission will be rescinded.
7. If denied, the Office of Admissions and Recruitment will provide a written notification to the accepted applicant. The applicant may choose to matriculate with the entering cohort or deny the offer of admission to the program.

### **Related Policies and References**

**None**

### **Definitions**

“Deferred matriculation” is the matriculation of an applicant who has accepted an offer of admission and intends to enroll but has elected to change their original matriculation term to a future term.

**Online Forms**

None

**History**

Revision Date(s): None.

## Procedure No. 18: Physician Assistant Program Student Professionalism Violation Procedure

### Procedure Statement

Students enrolled in the Physician Assistant Studies (PAS) Program must meet the academic and professional standards established by the PAS Program to progress through the didactic and clinical phases of the program. Physician Assistant Studies (PAS) students who do not meet the professionalism standards by committing a professionalism violation must successfully remediate their behavior to otherwise remain eligible to continue in the PAS Program.

### Reason for Procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to provide guidelines for remediation of a professionalism violation for all students enrolled in the PAS Program

### Area of Responsibility

Responsible party	Procedure detail section
PAS Student	1, 6, 7
Associate Program Director (APD)	2
Director of Clinical Education (DCE)	2
Program Director	6, 7
Course Director (CD)	2
PASPC	3
Student Affairs	5

### Procedure Details

1. Any PAS student receiving a professionalism violation must remediate that violation.
2. The CD, DCE or APD will establish a remediation plan and timeline with guidance from the PASPC, DAE or DCE as needed.
3. The PASPC will monitor student progress during the remediation process.
4. A remediation plan may include, but is not limited to:

- i) Written assignment using a department-approved structure and grading rubric
  - ii) Literature review with presentation
  - iii) Professionalism modules through Student Affairs
  - iv) Mandated professionalism mentoring by the CD, APD or DCE.
5. Potential violations of the UNTHSC Student Code of Conduct and Civility (“The Code”) will be referred to the Student Affairs Office and may be reported to the Texas Medical Board (TMB).
  6. A PAS student who commits a professionalism violation, except for minor lapses, will be reviewed and may result in placement on Academic Concern, Academic Probation, or other sanctions.
  7. A PAS student who does not successfully remediate a professionalism violation will be subject to dismissal.

### **Related Policies and References**

Physician Assistant Studies Program Graduation Requirements

Physician Assistant Studies Program Promotion, Probation, and Dismissal Procedure

Physician Assistant Studies Program Course Remediation Procedure

Student Code of Conduct and Civility (“The Code”)

*Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession (NCCPA, AAPA, PAEA, ARC-PA)*

### **Definitions**

1. Professionalism Violation. “Professionalism Violation” refers to any behavior that is deemed unprofessional by the standards established by the PA Studies department, HSC or the *Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession*.
2. Remediation. “Remediation” refers to activities designed to remedy a failed course grade due to an academic or professionalism violation.
3. Academic Probation. “Academic Probation” serves as notice to the student that their continued enrollment is in jeopardy.
4. Academic Concern. “Academic Concern” serves as notice to the student that their continued enrollment is in jeopardy and does not alter academic standing.
5. Successful professionalism remediation. “Successful professionalism remediation” means completion of all assigned remediation activities within the established timeline.

6. Unsuccessful professionalism remediation. “Unsuccessful professionalism remediation” means failure to complete all assigned remediation activities within the established timeline.

### **Online Forms**

PA Studies Remediation Agreement

### **History**

Revision Date(s): 08/01/2021

## Procedure No. 19: Physician Assistant Admission Seat Deposit

### Procedure Statement

Applicants admitted to The University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth (HSC) Physician Assistant (PA) Studies Program must pay a non-refundable Admission Seat Deposit to reserve their seat for full-time admission in the entering class. Admitted students are responsible for ensuring the deposit is paid by the stated deadline; otherwise, they will forfeit their seat in the entering class. The seat deposit will be credited toward the student's first-semester tuition and fees upon enrollment. Some circumstances may warrant a request to extend or waive the Admission Seat Deposit.

### Reason for Procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to establish guidelines for the payment of the Admission Seat Deposit for applicants offered full-time admission into the PA Studies Program.

### Area of Responsibility

Responsible party	Procedure detail section
Applicant	1-4
Office of Admissions and Recruitment (OAR)	2-4

### Procedure Details

1. Each year, applicants accepted into the PA Studies Program are required to pay a non-refundable Admission Seat Deposit that will be used toward the applicants' tuition upon matriculation.
  - a. By submitting a seat deposit and other required information, the applicant accepts an offer of admission to the PA Studies Program and confirms that they will attend classes for the given year.
  - b. Applicants may rescind the offer of admission to the PA Studies Program by notifying the Office of Admission and Recruitment (OAR) in writing of their decision.
  - c. Admission Seat Deposit payments are non-refundable if the applicant chooses not to attend the program.

2. Half of the Admission Seat Deposit is due 14 days after receiving an official offer. The remaining balance is due on June 1<sup>st</sup> of the matriculation year.
  - a. OAR will contact the applicant if the Admission Seat Deposit has not been received by the due date. Failure to respond may result in rescinding the applicant's seat in the cohort.
  - b. Any offers of admission to the HSC PA Studies Program made after June 1<sup>st</sup> will not require an Admission Seat Deposit.
3. Requesting an extension for the seat deposit:
  - a. Applicants who wish to request an extension must submit a written petition (i.e., postal mail, faxed copy, or email with attached documentation) to the OAR providing the reason for the request and the new proposed due date.
  - b. All requests for an extension must be submitted or postmarked by the original due date.
4. Requesting a waiver for the seat deposit:
  - a. Applicants who wish to request a waiver must submit a written petition (i.e., postal mail, faxed copy, or email with attached documentation) to the OAR explaining the reason for the request and providing any supporting documentation.
  - b. All requests for a waiver must be submitted or postmarked by the original due date.
  - c. A limited list of acceptable reasons for the request is provided below:
    - i. Financial hardship/need
      1. Applicant has qualified for CASPA Fee Assistance Program
      2. Applicant has qualified for need-based Federal assistance
      3. Applicant has submitted a financial hardship letter and supporting documentation
    - ii. Military status
      1. Applicant has current or previous military service
      2. Applicant has a direct family member with current or previous military service



## **Related Policies and References**

None

## **Definitions**

1. Applicant. "Applicant" is a person who has submitted a completed application for admission into the PA Studies Program using approved processes and has paid the required application fees.
2. Matriculation. "Matriculation" is when an applicant becomes a student and is enrolled in courses.
3. Admission Seat Deposit. "Admission Seat Deposit" is a non-refundable fee required to reserve an applicant's seat in the class for which they are admitted. The seat deposit is applied toward the applicant's tuition upon matriculation.

## **Online Forms**

All seat deposits are submitted online at The University of North Texas Health Science Center Commerce Manager Payer.

## **History**

Creation Date: 04/01/2023

Revision Date: n/a

## Procedure No. 20: Physician Assistant Student Attendance Procedure

### Procedure Statement

Students enrolled in the Physician Assistant Studies (PAS) Program must meet the academic and professional standards established by the PAS Program to progress through the didactic and clinical phases of the PAS Program. Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and clinics as per the published CHP academic calendar and course syllabus. Required classes and events for students are scheduled between the hours of 8 AM and 5 PM during the didactic phase; however, it may be necessary to hold classes, labs, or activities outside of these hours. Clinical phase students will be required to be available outside of the aforementioned times, as determined by the specific rotation. Students are required to attend course components as published in the schedule and syllabus. PAS students who do not meet attendance requirements in the didactic or clinical phase of training may not remain eligible to continue in the PAS Program. See Promotion, Probation, Dismissal Procedure Manual.

### Reason for Procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to provide guidelines for attendance for all students enrolled in the PAS Program.

### Area of Responsibility

Responsible party	Procedure detail section
PAS Student	1-7, 9-11, 14, 22-25
PAS Course Director (CD)/Liaison	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 25, 26
PAS Program Administration	2, 22, 26
Director of Clinical Education (DCE)	9-12, 16, 22, 25, 26
Director of Academic Education (DAE)	4, 22, 26

### Procedure Details for Didactic Phase

1. Attendance is required for all PAS course activities in each phase of the curriculum. PAS students must email the PAS CD/Liaison as soon as possible when an absence is expected or has occurred. PAS students requesting an excused absence must submit documentation to [pastudies@UNTHSC.edu](mailto:pastudies@UNTHSC.edu) and the PAS CD.
2. The PAS student may not accrue more than 5 *cumulative days of absence* per academic block without prior approval by the PAS Program administration.

3. Tracking Attendance:
  - a. Attendance will be documented by the PAS CD in each PAS course.
  - b. No PAS student may record the attendance of another PAS student for any reason. This action will constitute a violation of the UNTHSC Student Code of Conduct and Civility (“The Code”), resulting in disciplinary proceedings.
4. Excused absences may be granted for emergencies (i.e., bereavement) or illness related to the PAS student or dependent family members.
  - a. Documentation substantiating reasons for absences is required. (i.e., medical note for self or dependent or obituary with funeral date, etc.).
  - b. Documentation must be sent to [pastudies@UNTHSC.edu](mailto:pastudies@UNTHSC.edu) and the PAS CD.
  - c. All excused absences during didactic phase must be approved by the PAS CD/Liaison and the DAE.
  - d. HSC respects the rights of students to observe religious holy days which are considered excused absences. More information can be found in the Student Affairs Policy Manual.
  - e. For a PAS student who misses an assessment due to an excused absence, the PAS CD/Course Liaison and DAE<sub>7</sub> will coordinate with Testing Services (if applicable) to schedule a time, if it is possible, to make up the assessment. Notification of absence should be provided prior to the scheduled assessment.
5. Unexcused absences:
  - a. Letter grade courses: Each unexcused absence will result in a 1% deduction on the final PAS course grade. For example, a final average of 91% for the course would drop to 90% for one unexcused absence and to 89% for two unexcused absences. PAS students who miss an assessment with an unexcused absence will not be able to take the assessment and will receive a 0 for that assessment. Three unexcused absences will result in a course grade of “F”.
    - i. The PAS student may not miss 2 *consecutive business days for unexcused* absences per academic block (usually 9-week terms). This will result in a professionalism violation. See Professionalism Violation Procedure.
  - b. Pass/No Pass courses: Refer to course syllabus for assessment remediation for unexcused absences. See PA Studies Remediation procedure. Two unexcused absences will result in a grade of “No Pass”.
6. Tardiness is unprofessional conduct. PAS students are required to arrive to PAS course components on time.
  - a. PAS students must notify the PAS CD or Liaison of their estimated arrival time as soon as possible if tardiness is anticipated.
  - b. Chronic tardiness is not acceptable. Every 3 occurrences of tardiness in a course will result in an unexcused absence. Additional occurrences may result in a professionalism violation. See Professionalism Violation Procedure.

### Procedure Details for Clinical Phase

7. Attendance is required for all PAS course activities in each phase of the curriculum. Preceptors are not the approving authority to determine excused or unexcused absences.
8. Excused absences may be granted for emergencies (i.e., bereavement) or illness related to the PAS student or dependent family members.
9. Documentation substantiating reasons for absences is required. (i.e., medical note for self or dependent or obituary with funeral date, etc.).
  - a. Any time a student is absent or tardy or expects to be absent or tardy from the SCPE, they **must** notify/email the DCE (cc the SCPE Faculty Course Director) and the clinical preceptor as soon as feasible or the absence will be considered unexcused.
  - b. Failure to do this will be considered unprofessional behavior.
  - c. The student must record each absence in eValue™ time tracking.
10. Approval of absences is at the discretion of the DCE and should be requested prior to being absent. The DCE will determine if an absence is excused or unexcused.
11. The DCE is permitted to require the student to provide verification for any absences that occur, which may include proof of illness from a healthcare provider or proof of funeral attendance.
12. In emergent situations, the student must notify the DCE immediately via email. Failure to obtain approval from the DCE of any absence, including absence due to tardiness, may also include a remediation assignment.
13. A pattern of non-attendance and tardiness may be considered a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and Civility (“The Code”).
14. In the event of a SCPE failure, a student’s attendance record will be considered when making recommendations on probation, remediation, and dismissal.
15. Students are not permitted more than 2 excused absences total per SCPE. This does *not* mean that a student is automatically granted 2 absences per SCPE. **Greater than 2 absences will result in repeating the entire SCPE, with the exception of illness requiring quarantine.**
16. Excessive excused absences may result in additional clinical experience/assignments and potentially repeating the entire SCPE. The student will be required to make up the missed time at the discretion of the DCE. **In the event the student cannot make up the missed time prior to the end of the SCPE, the student will be required to repeat the entire SCPE.** Make up assignments are not permitted to interfere with other SCPE requirements.
17. Taking call may be a requirement of a SCPE setting. Failure to respond or participate in call mandated by the preceptor will be considered an unexcused absence as well as unprofessional conduct.
18. Some clinical assignments may require the student to attend activities on weekends, holidays, or other irregular hours when their clinical preceptor is working. A lack of willingness to participate in these activities reflect negatively on the PAS Program and the PA profession and will be considered unprofessional conduct.

19. Unreported absences will automatically be considered unexcused absences, which could result in failure of the SCPE, be considered unprofessional conduct, and possibly result in dismissal from the PAS Program.
20. For a PAS student who misses an assessment due to an excused absence, the Clinical team member for the clinical phase will coordinate with Testing Services (if applicable) to schedule a time, if it is possible, to make up the assessment. Notification of absence should be provided prior to the scheduled assessment.
21. HSC respects the rights of students to observe religious holy days which are considered excused absences. More information can be found in the Student Affairs Policy Manual.

#### **Procedure Details Pertaining to both Didactic and Clinical Phases**

22. Extenuating circumstances: Request for absences not specified above must be preapproved by PAS Program administration (Didactic Phase: DAE and Clinical Phase: DCE)
23. Whether an absence is excused or unexcused, make-up sessions or “re-teaching” of previously delivered materials is not guaranteed. The PAS student is responsible for all material covered during any missed class/SCPE activity. Most course components cannot be made up or recreated.
24. PAS student attendance may be considered when making recommendations for, but not limited to, the following: disciplinary actions, remediation, dismissal, awards, scholarships, honors, and honors elective SCPEs.
25. Virtual attendance. Virtual access to an in-person session is not guaranteed. Virtual access is at the discretion of the CD and/or DCE. Virtual access does not substitute for in-person class attendance or remediation requirements. The PAS student is responsible for all material covered during any missed course component. Refer to excused absence definition and requirements.
26. For all communicable diseases, the PAS Program will follow CDC guidelines pertaining to attendance for any class/SCPE activity.

#### **Related Policies, Procedures, References**

University Academic Calendar

SCPE Student Handbook

Physician Assistant Graduation Requirements

Physician Assistant Professionalism Violation Procedure

Physician Assistant Promotion, Probation, and Dismissal Procedure Manual

UNTHSC Student Affairs Policy Manual

UNTHSC Student Code of Conduct and Civility (“The Code”)

**Definitions**

1. Excused absence: An absence is considered “excused” if the student can provide documentation that the absence was necessary based on emergency or illness (i.e., medical note or obituary with funeral date) and/or has received appropriate approval following the process outlined in the didactic and clinical handbooks.
2. Unexcused absence: an absence is considered “unexcused” if the student is unable to provide documentation that the absence was based on emergency or illness and/or has **not** received appropriate approval following the process outlined in the didactic and clinical handbooks.

**Online Forms**

N/A

**History**

Procedure created May 2023.

Revision Date(s): none.

## Appendix A

### Advice from Successful PAS Students

- Study every day.
- Discuss what you learned with others.
- There is nothing wrong with getting help, CAP has a lot of good resources.
- Figure out what works for YOU. It may not be the same as what is best for your friends in the class, so do not study with them if it is not conducive to your learning.
- Study in the morning.
- Preview!
- Find different classmates that excel in different areas and learn what and how they study.
- Organize your studying. Keep a planner and write down what you are going to study and when.
- You must study on your own to benefit from what your peers have to offer. Once you know the information, study in groups, bounce ideas off each other for clarity, compare “important points”, and go to labs (OSCE and anatomy) with different people.
- Do not expect your classmates to teach you what you have not studied. Do not copy your peer’s work because you do not have time to do it yourself. Do not do exactly what everyone else in the class does.
- Give yourself breaks. Spend a couple of hours each day with family or friends and do not even think about studying! Set an alarm on your phone when it is time to go back to studying.
- Get your sleep! Staying up too late only makes everything worse!
- Choose what attitude you will have. People that are optimistic have much less stress.

## Appendix B

### College of Health Professions Dismissal Appeal Process

#### Reason for Procedure

An CHP student who receives a decision for dismissal from the Department Chair can appeal the dismissal decision to the CHP Dean.

#### Area of Responsibility

Student: Process(es) 1, 3, 5, 6, 8

Student and Advisor: Process 8

Department Chair/Program Director: Process(es) 4, 5, 7

CHP Dean: Process(es) 2,10

Appeal Officer: Process(es) 2, 3, 5, 6,9

Ad hoc Appeal Committee: Process(es) 2, 9

UNT System Office of the General Counsel: 8

#### Process Details

The following administrative procedures should be followed in sequential order:

1. The student must submit their intent to appeal via email to the CHP Dean in **writing within five (5) business days** of receiving official notification of dismissal from an CHP program.
2. The CHP Dean will charge an ad hoc committee to review the appeal and conduct a hearing. The committee will be composed of four appointed CHP faculty members and the designated Appeal Officer (AO). These will be the only voting members for the appeal. The members should not include individuals directly involved in the original dismissal decision.
3. The student will submit a written appeal statement that the student may read at the hearing and supporting documentation to the committee through the AO. Documents must be submitted to the AO **within three business days** after submitting the appeal to the CHP Dean. No additional documents will be considered after the initial submission. The student must notify the Dean if they plan to be accompanied by an advisor and/or an attorney at the hearing.



4. The Department Chair will provide the committee with documentation supporting the dismissal decision through the AO.
5. The Chair and/or student may submit written witness statements as part of the document review. In some cases, witnesses (es) may be asked to appear in person at the hearing. The Chair and/or student must submit the witness(es) names, including a witness statement, to the AO within **three business days** from receipt of the student's written appeal letter. The AO will decide if in-person witness testimony is relevant and/or necessary. The AO can limit the number of in-person witnesses to facilitate the process and avoid redundancy.
6. The AO reviews and provides all documents to the committee. The student will appear before the ad hoc committee for all dismissal appeals. The hearing will typically be completed **within five business days of the receipt of the appeal**.
7. During the hearing, the Department Chair will present the case and relevant documentation supporting the dismissal decision to the committee.
8. The student may read their written appeal statement to the committee during the hearing. The student may be assisted by an advisor of the student's choosing. If an advisor assists the student, only the student may speak or ask questions. If the advisor has a license to practice law, this must be disclosed in advance. **If the student is accompanied by an attorney, an attorney from the UNT System Office of the General Counsel must also be present at the hearing.**
9. Following the appeal hearing, the ad hoc committee will review the evidence and deliberate in a closed session. The committee then makes a non-binding recommendation to the Dean.
10. The CHP Dean makes the **final** decision based on the review of information and recommendations of the ad hoc committee. **The Dean will notify the student of the decision within three days of the appeal proceeding.**

#### **Related Policies and Procedures**

- 7.103 Institutional Academic Policy

- CHP 15.306 Doctor of Physical Therapy Promotions, Probation, Dismissal
- Procedure No. LHS-103 – LHS Remediation Procedure
- Procedure No. 16 - Physician Assistant Promotion, Probation, Dismissal Procedure

## References

N/A

## Definitions

Dismissal. “Dismissal” means disenrollment from the curriculum in their respective department/program. A dismissed student is not eligible for graduation.

## Online Forms

None

**Effective Date: July 2023**

**Revision Date(s): Not Applicable**

**Reviewed Date(s):**

## Administrative Authority:

Dean, College of Health Professions

**RESPONSIBLE UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT/DIVISION (R\*)**

**College of Health Professions**

Dean, College of Health Professions

3500 Camp Bowie Blvd

817-735-2762

CHP@unthsc.edu

## **Appendix C**

### **College of Health Professions Student Leave of Absence Process**

#### **Reason for Process**

This process aims to align the program(s) procedures within the College of Health Professions and state the process for student leave of absence for the College of Health Professions and its subsidiary programs.

#### **Area of Responsibility**

Student:

LOA Process(es) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Readmission Process(es) 1, 2

Department Chair/Program Director:

LOA Process 3, 7

Readmission Process(es) 5, 6

CHP Dean:

LOA Process 5

Readmission Process(es) 3, 4

Office of the Registrar:

LOA Process 6

#### **Process Details**

### **Requesting a Leave of Absence (LOA):**

1. For students wishing to seek LOA, the student initiates a meeting with the Department Chair/Program Director to seek information on the process, qualifications, and requirements for leave and return from leave. The meeting should outline the following:
  - a. What a Leave of Absence means
  - b. Outlining the process for leave of absence
  - c. The different types of leave- medical vs. personal
  - d. Where to obtain the proper forms and documentation
2. The student notifies the Chair of their decision to proceed with LOA.
  - a. The student obtains the necessary form/s from the Office of the Registrar.
3. Chair sends an email to the student and copies the DAE, DCE, faculty advisor, Office of Registrar, and Dean that the student is initiating the process and outlining approval.
4. Student submits a request with supporting documentation to Dean following Chair approval and meets with all necessary departments on the official form.
5. The student submits the official Office of the Registrar LOA form after obtaining the necessary signatures on the form and other required documents. (The directions on the form must be followed. The signatures needed on the form can be completed in person or via electronic means if the appropriate discussions with each entity have occurred.)
  - a. If the leave is due to a medical condition, the request must include documentation from a licensed healthcare professional that the student is under their care. A letter from a relative will not be accepted. Documentation supporting leave for medical reasons must describe the nature of the medical need and the estimated length of time needed.
  - b. If leave is due to personal reasons, the student must be in good standing, and the request must be accompanied by documentation from the student describing the reason and the estimated length of time needed for resolution. Leave of absence for personal reasons cannot be granted if the sole purpose for taking the leave of absence is to avoid a failing grade or placement onto academic probation.

- c. The Dean signs the form if approved for a leave of absence.
6. The Office of the Registrar verifies that the student has taken a Leave of Absence and notifies Program Director and Dean.
7. If LOA is approved:
  - a. An official letter from the Department Chair/Program Director that outlines receipt of the LOA form being processed (send with a read receipt) and outlines conditions for return, including:
    - the timeline to request readmission
    - readmission process
    - approved future curriculum plan
    - consequences of failure to meet the revised academic schedule/plan of study.
  - b. The letter is sent by #HSCSecure to the student. The following key contacts (not all-inclusive) are copied in the letter if applicable:
    - **Dean, College of Health Professions**
    - **Student & Academic Affairs**
    - Department/Program Faculty Advisor
    - Director of Clinical Education (if clinical education is affected by LOA)
    - Director of Academic Education
    - Specific course directors of courses that are critical to the student's plan of study
    - Academic Program Manager
    - **Financial Aid**
    - Center for Academic Performance
    - **Director of Enrollment & Records/Registrar ([registrar@unthsc.edu](mailto:registrar@unthsc.edu) and Director of Enrollment, Records and Registrar)**

**Readmission:**

1. The student notifies the Office of the Registrar, the Dean of the College of Health Professions, Department Chair/Program Director of the intent to return to the program, when possible, at least 30 days before the start of the classes.
2. Upon returning from a leave of absence, the student must petition for readmission in writing, regardless of the reason. Depending on the reason, the returning student may be required to submit additional documentation supporting their ability to resume a full academic load in their respective program.
3. The Dean will review documentation and determine the date of return and curricular path with consultation of the Department Chair/Program Director.
4. The Dean sends an official letter to the Department Chair/Program Director and Registrar of the decision for readmission.
5. The Department Chair/Program Director sends a letter confirming the decision on readmission and reaffirming the conditions for readmission to the student. If the student fails to accept the readmission plan as a condition of enrollment, the student may be dismissed from the program.
6. The Department Chair/Program Director sends student confirmation and a specific curricular plan based on the return timeline. The following key contacts (not all-inclusive) are copied in the letter if applicable:
  - a. Dean, College of Health Professions
  - b. Student & Academic Affairs
  - c. Department/Program Faculty Advisor
  - d. Director of Clinical Education (if clinical education is affected by LOA)
  - e. Director of Academic Education
  - f. specific course directors of courses that are critical to the student's plan of study
  - g. Academic Program Manager

- h. Financial Aid
- i. Center for Academic Performance
- j. Director of Enrollment & Records/Registrar ([registrar@unthsc.edu](mailto:registrar@unthsc.edu) and Director of Enrollment, Records and Registrar)

### **Related Policies and Procedures**

- 7.103 Institutional Academic Policy
- Procedure No. 13 - Physician Assistant Studies Leave of Absence
- CHP 15.306 Doctor of Physical Therapy Promotion, Probation, and Dismissal

### **References**

- MSLS Student Handbook

### **Definitions**

Good Standing: Definition varies by program. Please reference the following for definitions:

- Procedure No. 13- Physician Assistant Studies Leave of Absence
- CHP 15.306 Doctor of Physical Therapy Promotion, Probation, and Dismissal
- MSLS Student Handbook

### **Online Forms**

None

### **History**

The College of Health Professions contains multiple programs with individual procedures that utilize the process outlined in this document. The process was created on June 13, 2023.

**Effective Date:** June 13, 2023

**Administrative authority (R\*)**

Dean, College of Health Professions

**RESPONSIBLE UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT/DIVISION (R\*)**

**College of Health Professions**

Dean, College of Health Professions

3500 Camp Bowie Blvd

817-735-2762

[CHP@unthsc.edu](mailto:CHP@unthsc.edu)



## Acknowledgement and Receipt

I have read the PAS Student Handbook and received answers from PAS faculty or staff to any questions that I may have had. Should additional questions arise, I understand that I may contact PAS faculty and staff. I recognize it is my responsibility to understand and comply with the policies and procedures contained in this handbook, and any revisions made to it in the future. I know where to find the PAS Student Handbook on the PA Studies Website, and I will reference the handbook when PAS program questions arise. I understand that this information applies to me while on or off campus when acting in my role as a PAS student.

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PAS Student Signature

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PAS Student Name (Printed)

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Date